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NATURAL RELIGION

—IN—

SERMONS

—BY—

JAMES VILA BLAKE

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TO

HORACE H. BADGER

WITH FRIENDSHIP THREE-FOLD JOYFUL,

BY LOVE, BY TRUST,

BY ADMIRATION.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

An apostle says it is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." In this passage from the epistle of James, religion is a practical interest in the market, the court, the street, daily goodness, worthiness of life. Luther thought religion to be salvation by faith. He detested the epistle of James, and called it, as is well known, an epistle of straw, "*straminea epistola.*" The great reformer is not the first man, nor the last, who, while professing to found on sacred writ, has disposed thus easily of whatever tried his theological patience. But is Luther right? or is James right? or who is right among the many diverse thinkers on religion? What is religion? At least it seems a reality, which sometimes sweeps over our souls, filling us with a strange light and feeling of life, joy, peace. Is it a high, pure morality, as James and many others say? Is it faith in some means of grace and salvation, as Luther and many others declare? Is it sacrifice, or prayer, or worship of God, as still others tell us? Is it devotion and striving unto the truth, as some would have it? or, as I have heard it defined, "an aspiration toward *the ideal?*"

Here is a strange thing! Yet the fact meets us in many things every day! We all speak about religion, truly we feel it, we build churches for it, we come together in them to seek its inspiration. Yet if we ask what religion is, no one can define it or tell what it is.

First, let us ask, Is religion a form? or practice of a form? or any kind of observance? In reply, Whether is the outward act the more important, or the inward state, feeling, experience which impels to the act? Ought not the inward condition to be named religion? Form is but expression. Not the mode of expression, but what is expressed, not the language but the

meaning, is essential. Besides, form is the variable element. The same feeling or thought may be expressed in many ways. Religious forms vary as languages do. Refined and barbarous tongues thrill equally with human love, joy and woe. If, therefore, form be religion,—what form? And why any one form? For all convey the tremblings of the same spirit. They utter in different speech the universal prayer. And if there be no form, no constant uniformity of expression, nay, if there be no expression at all, and silence hang as a veil before this holy of holies, the religious experience of the soul,—what matter? Doth a man not love because he proclaims it not on the housetops? Is religion naught if it hide in the heart and commune with God unspeaking? Plainly religion is not form or forms. It is that inward reality, whatever it be, which may take all forms or none. It makes its own fit expression at need. It lives tranquilly also in a sacred silence.

But if religion be something inward, resident in the spirit, shall we have recourse to belief? Is religion belief of certain doctrine or doctrines? Is it assent to a statement or creed?

But opposing doctrines have been held with equal fervor and self-sacrifice. Martyrs prove not truth. Men have perished by sword and flame for Judaism, Mohammedanism, Unitarianism, as readily and firmly as for the great church and its orthodoxy. The Romanist shows a long and cherished list of martyrs; but Roman persecution has enriched all communions with sacrifices no less glorious. It seems then hard to tell, if religion be a belief in doctrines, *what* doctrines constitute religion. For *all* have the witness of human devotion unto death. Between doctrines so hallowed, will you decide which is religion? Shall I decide? Shall there be an authority to decree? Then religion is but repetition, recitation, profession without personal answerableness. Besides, shall we say all those ages and peoples were void of religion which had not that authority and its decrees? Shall, then, each man decide for himself? But we are fallible beings. The most earnest mind may err. Therefore surely the spirit is to be considered more than the result, and an honest mistake surely can not be irreligious or unreligious.

So then, doctrines and forms seem no more than the gar-

ments of religion. If still we ask what true religion is, we must go deeply to the inward and unutterable, to facts of the spirit more sacred and essential than any belief whatever.

Let us ask, then, What this still deeper reality of the spirit is? this that creates forms and empowers belief. For this that underlies all the many expressions of religion, surely must be a pure and simple religiousness.

Religion, in common experience everywhere, is at least so much as this,—a going forth of the spirit in devout feelings and adorations. It is homage, devotion, veneration, awe. So much, I say, it is at least. Whatever more religion may be, at least it is this. It takes many forms. It invests many different things, with sanctity; at last all things, by its fulness of beauty and power. But underneath all the changing ways and forms of men, amid all the harsh struggle of the creeds, religion lies the self-same in every religious heart,—hope, trust, adoration. This may turn aside to ugly forms, wretched objects, harsh creeds; but itself abides essentially indestructible, undefiled. I mean not that bad forms and worse creeds impede not this inner adoration. They do hinder it. I deem the harm done by the doctrine of salvation by blood-atonement to pure religious adoration, very great. But I say, that such a doctrine, and others worse, *corrupt* not the adoring spirit at its depths. They may hinder and clog it,—no more. It is like flame which, however feeble or smoke-mingled, still is flame, pure and incorruptible.

What now calls forth a pure and perfect adoration? What does the good spirit,—or the spirit in its undefiled deeps—adore, venerate, love and worship? Only Holiness, Truth, and Loveliness,—"The Good, the Beautiful and the True." It is purely religious to believe in these, to be filled with love and veneration for them. The spirit, in the springs of its worship, is undefiled. It aspires, therefore, to the Infinitely Good. It adores at last the undefiled, like itself. Perfect Holiness, Pure Truth, Divine Beauty, these it worships. Before these it bows down, kneels, fears, loves. It veils not its eyes, nor abases itself. Not such its way of worship—though with awe. For only in adoration of the Perfect Beauty, and Goodness, does it know its own undefiled being.

But now it is asked, If religion be adoration of Beauty and Holiness, what is morality? Morality, surely, is no more outward than religion. Morality is not a good act. It is the *goodness* of the act. Men differ about the justice and righteousness of many things. Good men differ sincerely and uprightly. Therefore morality resides in the inward state, in pure motive and conscientiousness, in devotion to the true and the good. How then distinguished from religion? Yet, surely, they are not the same. We never use the words indifferently.

The question is just. Religion and morality mean not the same, though they can not part and live in their grandeurs. Let us make the difference clear.

Man, as he grows in soul, is placed in two different relations with Beauty and Goodness. In one relation he scans his own soul. Beauty and Goodness then appear to him as ideal qualities which it is the business of the soul to make real, in itself. He finds himself imperfect, selfish, passionate, unkind, untrue, unearnest. But from the center of him, the spring of life pure and undefiled, grows the command, "These things thou shalt not be; lo! here in thy very life and essence, thou art written down Beautiful and Holy. Follow thine own real nature. The Good, the Beautiful, the True, are the image of what thou art by nature here where thou canst not be defiled, and the image of what thou shalt be in very deed and truth, by sanctified will and holy devotion." Morality, therefore, views the Good and Beautiful as *unrealized* and *to be realized*. It aspires to them as to the end of being. It contemplates them as its ideal, the high image shrined within of what it is not, but ought to be, and shall be.

But again, man looks forth abroad over the wide creation, and into his own spirit, no longer as a solitude of moral obligations. He contemplates all before him as part of one mighty whole. Then the Good, the Beautiful and the True shine out with real light. No longer hoped for only, they are found. What his devotion burned to, as the aim, destiny, ideal, of his being, now he adores as the present and perfect nature of all being. Holiness surrounds him. He lives in the righteous Unity. Beauty, Truth, Goodness, Love, all that is pure and lovely, Divine, Infinitely Beautiful, shines everywhere, flows in

the streams, rivers and rains, follows the starry paths of the sky, flies with the invisible winds, and lights the earth with divine radiance from saint and prophet, "mother and child." Then the soul comes forth in pure and supreme adoration of this Holy Being. This adoration is Religion.

Religion and Ethics have the same root, namely, the distinction between Good and Evil; Right and Wrong. This is involved in saying that each is fundamentally a mental attitude toward the Good, the Beautiful and the True.

But they differ in the attitude.

Religion adores the Good, the Beautiful and the True as *Being*, Infinitely Manifest and Eternal, and the *Source of us.*

Ethics bows to the Good, the Beautiful and the True, not as now *Being*, but as an ideality to be made to be by us.

Religion is that inward experience which binds us back to our Source, and is Emotion, Awe, Love, Adoration, Devotion.

Morality is that inward sanction which commands us to live unto our natural ideal, end and aim, and is a Principle—obligation, self-requirement, self-answerableness.

And Religion must be suffused with the Ethical Principle of Righteousness.

And Morality must be suffused with the Religious Emotion —Reverence, the Sense of the Awfulness of the OUGHT, and of its unity with all life.

But can they be parted and live? I think in their low forms they can; in their exalted, complete forms, not. But religion is at once the more spiritual, fecund, creative,—and dependent. It has the seeds of all life in it. Yet Ethics can grow better without Religion than Religion without Ethics. This would seem to follow from their nature, as I have stated it. For the initial impulse of Religion is the sentiment which *binds us back to our Source.* In the beginning I suppose that sentiment is fear—mainly at least, perhaps wholly. It is only in its fulness and glory that religion adores our Source as the Good, the Beautiful and the True. But it is in these thoughts that Ethics has its root. Therefore Ethics begins with a substance which Religion must grow to. But whether Religion must grow to it before Ethics can begin with it, may be a question. Or whether Religion and Ethics grow together and feed each other, from the

beginning. I like not to divide man into parts or faculties, and say, this part did so, or this other part so; for the whole man acts in all. Yet, also, one form of growth may forerun another. But this seems certain, that Ethics can attain a greater nobility and purity among persons disowning Religion, than Religion can attain among persons disowning Ethics or heedless of it.

I return, now, once more to my simple statement of Religion and Morality:

Morality is devotion to Beauty, Truth and Holiness as to be realized in us and by us; Religion is adoration of Beauty, Truth and Holiness as realized and radiant in Being.

> "Its altars are the mountains and the ocean,
> Earth, air, stars, all that springs from the Great Whole,
> Who hath produced, and will receive the soul."

But now I shall be reminded that I have not spoken of God, the Father. "Do you mean to say that one who will not name God may be religious?" Yes, I think so. I mean to say so. He that can not utter the Great and Holy Name is one whose idea of the Being which is Holy and Beautiful differs from yours and mine. But if still he reverence and love the resident Beauty and Goodness, why shall he not be called religious? His heart may be thrilled by the light, the day, the night, the sweet earth, the opening flower, the innocence of childhood, the venerableness of age. Is not that religious, devout? If such a one be called irreligious or unreligious, I will leave the sentence to Him who sees and knows the heart, which I can not see. Yet I would rather be such than many a so-called believer. Do you remember the picture the poet draws of the dreadful man of faith?—

> "A man austere,
> The instinct of whose nature was to kill;
> The wrath of God he preached from year to year,
> And read, with fervor, Edwards on the Will;
> His favorite pastime was to slay the deer
> In summer on some Adirondac Hill;
> E'en now, while walking down the rural lane,
> He lopped the way-side lilies with his cane."

Have you never known a man who could not see the living spirit of God, and frankly said so, yet touched with speechless veneration and tender care the brittle fern leaf, would not break or bruise the sighing reed, looked with solemn reverence

on every creeping thing whose life he could not make and would not destroy, gazed with strange rapture into the unknown depths of an animal's eye, and felt his own fill with tears at the beauty of the earth's green and gold on hill and plain? Which of the two, think you, is the more religious man? He who lopped the lily ruthlessly, because therewith he spoke a name for the maker of the lily? Nay, rather than so, I would speak no name. Surely I should be loved and not judged harshly, nor misjudged by Him who cares not for names but sees the thoughts of the heart, and everywhere is the Living Spirit who "out of his own beauty maketh all things fair."

NOTE—Regarding the last paragraph of this sermon I will add the following:

I agree thankfully with those who say that the thought of God is necessary to Religion. But this is not the same as to say that no one can be religious who denies that thought. For a sentiment, a feeling, even a character may be religious without Religion, just as a tone or a concord may be musical but is not music. Far more is included in music than a musical tone; in like manner far more is embraced in Religion than a religious sentiment or tone of mind. When it is said that the thought of God is necessary to Religion, it is meant, not that there can be naught religious without that thought or name, but that Religion in its completeness comes to that thought, and that Religion must be defined by all it comes to, not by any partial manifestation of it on its way to its full and perfect nature. This truth was set forth by David Wasson twenty years ago in a manner all satisfying to my reason, in a notable discussion at that time. He was examining a definition of Religion then offered, namely that "Religion is man's effort to perfect himself." I will take here the substance and general expression of his argument. Religion he says, is compatible with unbelief in God only as the raising of wheat is compatible with bad weather or as life in a human body is compatible with having no legs. But no infer-

ence can be made from such compatibility to the true nature of Religion; for can we say that wheat involves bad weather or is indifferent to good weather, or that legs appertain not naturally to the human form and should not be a part of the definition of it? It is true that some religious men have not attributed to Religion this significance—the thought of God. That is, some men have been religious without avowed belief in God or even with avowed unbelief. But this fact could show that the thought of God is not needful to a right definition of Religion only if it were shown *that a moving principle in man never fails to report its full significance in the opinion of all who are moved by it.* But this is not the fact and can not be shown; and Ethics as well as Religion affords illustration. The moral sentiment has been explained as mere self-interest, as the factitious effect of education, and in many other ways. What now if we should reason that the moral sentiment *can not* signify anything more than self-interest since there are men of moral behavior and moved by right attractions who have thought there is nothing in human nature superior to self-interest? It is not sound thinking to define *by the inferior limit*, that is, the least that a given kind of thing can be; but rather *by the superior limit*, that is, the utmost that it tends to, comes to, and includes. Definition by the inferior limit, indeed, is no definition, but merely a classification. Man is a vertebrate animal; but to say this is not to give an account of man, but simply to classify him. It is to say what he is in common with a fish, not what he is *as man.* As man he must be defined by the superior limit, the utmost he can come to. So with Religion. It is defined to my mind and desire by what it may become at the top. I study it to learn what it is in its widest embrace of ideas, in its richest content. This gives me its true nature. And therein I find, present, constant, essential, the thought of God. Such is the argument of Wasson. (See "The Radical," May, 1870.) In accordance with it, I have been careful not to say in the sermon that my description of Religion is a definition or complete account of it, or even a statement of its highest idea; but only that Religion is *at least* so much as I have described it to be. And this I have done with two motives—to show that even in so much of its content it is a different thing from Ethics; and to say that Religion is so much

a state of the heart that a man may be religious who is far from avowing the highest idea embraced by the perfect and true nature of Religion, nay, even more religious than one who avows that highest idea with his mouth "but his heart is far from it."

RELIGION AND ETHICS.

I will pursue the subject of my last sermon, Religion and its relation to Morality, more in detail.

My question is, "Is any religion other than purely scientific Ethics necessary or desirable?" The question is stated carefully. Religion might be necessary, and if necessary, of course desirable; but it might be desirable even if not necessary.

Let us understand at the outset the terms with which we have to deal. What is Ethics and what is Scientific Ethics?

Happily these are terms that may be defined easily and accurately. Ethics is simply the principles of right conduct. Scientific Ethics means the principles of right conduct not merely stated as rules, but evolved in an orderly manner; furnished with a basis in the nature of things, and combined together in general statements and laws. Thus, in a word, Ethics is the rule or art of right conduct in human life; and Scientific Ethics is that rule or art formulated as a part of the nature of things.

Evidently this is a noble study. Many persons think it is the noblest of all the spheres of human contemplation and emotion. Such persons say that the study of Ethics gives all the inspiration that human life can need. They say that it is the sufficient source and explanation of all human progress and happiness. They tell us that Ethics has this great point, that it can be understood. Here at last, they say, we have something toward which we can see a perpetual progress. By study of Ethics we can understand the relations of individuals to each other, and to society. The questions commonly called religious, these persons say, are remote. They are distant and dim. They are beyond our perception or our reason. Questions of prayer, of worship, of Providence, of the impenetrable future,

which may be or may not be, beyond the vale of death, are matters beyond our ken. So too, the question of unseen existence and of its relation to us; of the mind and the spiritual being, and their relations to the body. All such, they say, lie in a domain which we can not enter. Of the very existence of that sphere, we must remain in doubt. To try to penetrate it takes human time to no purpose. The mind then fills with hopes, desires, or fears, useless superstitions. Emotions awake which have no import or worth in human life. The mind thus is withdrawn from a fruitful meditation of present needs, and of our high responsibilities at the present moment. Instead of these useful thoughts, we are misled by contemplations either selfish or empty, or at least, far beyond the proper realm of our knowing powers. Better and nobler, these persons say, it is, both in effect on our characters, and in usefulness to the world, to be busy with the duties and needs which are to be understood clearly and lie closely at hand. We are in a world, they tell us, full of errors, weighted with selfishness, struggling with the problems of crime, of labor, of all manner of injustice, of education, of wealth, of temperance. Why should we waste our time thinking of our relations to unseen things that we know not, when not yet we have learned how to do our duty to each other? What is to be will be. What is to become of us when our eyes close in death, *will* become of us. We can not alter it, any more than know it. But we can go to work bravely and unselfishly, with love of mankind, to wrestle with the evil before our eyes; to uplift the fallen, to find and save the lost, to reclaim the criminal, to comfort the sorrowing, to heal the sick. *This* is religion, they tell us, so far as that word has any valid meaning for us. By this, whatever may become of us when we fly away, we shall have helped to leave the world better for those who come after; perhaps shed blessings along our path.

This is the moral teaching which my question supposes when it asks whether any other religion than this, pure, elevated Ethics, scientifically based and unfolded, is necessary or desirable.

Now, let me bear my witness to the nobility of this teaching. I would not say one word to disparage it. It were a

ruthless hand that would detract from the high praise of it, or dim the beauty of its usefulness. To my mind it is incomplete; it answers not the whole of human need or power, or of human experience; and this I shall try to show. But it is not the incompleteness of indolence or selfishness.

If I had to choose between Ethics and Religion, I would take my part with Ethics. Better to have a glorious, unselfish, hardworking, aspiring morality without religion, than to persuade one's self there is a religion without morality. I can not state this too strongly, I can not honor too much the ethical school for the sincere grandeur of their purpose. But I think they pursue their purpose by a cramped and narrow method. 'Tis a grand thing sought in a limited mechanical way. They turn into a side-lot on the great highway. Be that lot greater or smaller, it is not the whole landscape; neither is it the highway. I believe Religion to be, in addition, a great and sacred fact, both needful and to be desired.

I will not try in the beginning to define Religion, as I have defined Ethics, because the definition is by no means so simple or so easy. I could not define it without assuming some of the very things which are at issue with those who think Religion either unreal or untrue, as answering to no facts; or else useless and unmeaning, as treating of things unknowable by us. Still, my main reason for attempting no definition of Religion at the outset is that I shall give one before I finish, for it is right and needful to know clearly what we mean by terms. Yet, even at the outset, I must have some idea of what I mean by the word "Religion." I must use it in some sense understood clearly. So I will find this sense and partial definition in a question which religion asks. That question is, *Our origin.* Whence are we? From what do we spring? Now, Science asks this question too, but very differently from Religion. Science asks it precisely as it investigates the place of man among animals, simply from curiosity and thirst of knowledge. This though noble, is not emotion. Whether the answer be one thing or another, 'tis no matter to science. Science is satisfied. But religion asks the question "Whence come we?" with deep feeling, as we may conceive done by a person ignorant of his parenthood, yearning to know it. Suppose one has grown up with strangers. He

longs then to know of his father, of his mother, whether he had brothers and sisters, not as items of knowledge, but as things pertaining to deep needs of relationship, of love within him. In this way Religion asks the question, "Whence have we come? What is our origin?" So much, I think, will be conceded. If there be any such thing as religion at all, or any facts in us to which the name answers, it contains so much, at least, as this question, "Whence come we?" asked with yearning and love. Many other questions also it asks; but this at least, and certainly. So much, then, we will start with.

Ethics asks no such question. It takes our being here as it finds it, and is busy with the question, What conduct is proper for such beings as we are?

Now the question "Whether Religion, as thus distinguished from Ethics, is necessary or desirable," is an immense question, altogether beyond the scope of one discourse, if I were to treat it fully. It involves a discussion of the adaption of Religion to the human mind in all the powers of the mind. We could not discuss the question fully until we should arrive at a definition of Religion as valid as that which I have given of Ethics. We must have not only a valid idea of religion so far as the idea goes, but a plenary and complete idea of it; and then we should have to study the relation of that to human thinking, human feeling, human sentiments and needs. We should have to ask ourselves, indeed, What is the ideal of a complete man? These subjects branch so widely and run so endlessly through all the kinds of human knowledge and experience, that I must hold myself in this discourse strictly to one point, in order to meet the question with some thoroughness. But if I can show that Religion is essentially a different thing from Ethics, and different in a very great manner, because it contains an element which is not in Ethics, but nevertheless answers to a very deep reality in human experience, as it is now and as it must continue to be, then at least, I shall have shown a place for Religion; and it will be thought needful or desirable in proportion to the depth and worth of the human experience to which it relates.

To do this I will take the one point, of the relations of Ethics and of Religion to Time. I take this because it is fundamental, and because it has been treated less than any of the

many other aspects of the question which I might study. What, then, are the relations of Ethics and Religion to Time in the three-fold aspect of Time, the past, present and future?

Both Religion and Ethics stand in close relation to the *present.* Ethics relates to the present by its study of the laws of conduct. Its question is, What ought we to do in this present condition of things? Religion too is related to the present, because that one great question which we have agreed to start with, as included in Religion—the question, "Whence come we?"—means whence come we *hither?* From what origin do we find ourselves *here?* Religion must contemplate the source of us, as continuing us and continuing with us here; at least, the question arises necessarily, *Is* it so? Is the source from which we come existent also in the conditions in which we are?

Again, Religion and Ethics are both related strictly to *the future.* Ethics pertains to the future because it aims chiefly at a betterment of our condition. Its object is to improve human conduct, thus making the world better than it is. It bids a man devote himself not only to other people, but to coming times, laying plans for a nobler, a purer society. Religion, too, relates itself to the future because the question, Whence are we? What is our source? and the related questions that come trooping therewith about the present, involve the questions also, Whither go we? What becomes of us? What relation to our source do our destiny, our aim and end maintain? So then both Religion and Ethics have to do with the present and the future, the things here, and the coming things.

But what shall be said of the *past?* Do Ethics and Religion both stand related to the past as to the present and to the future? No. This is the privilege or nature of Religion alone. Ethics is a sum of principles which have no vital dependence whatever on the past. Ethics has a history, of course. It may have curious historical questions. It may develop its principles partly by the help of the study of its history. But every principle in it would be just the same without regard to the past. Not so with Religion. Its question, "Whence come we? What is our source?" questions the past. It stands in vital connection with the past. Without that meditation backward, that one

question would be impossible. Religion dreams of a time, as it were, before time; of a source which appears at one with eternity, as at least unmeasured, perhaps unmeasurable. It dreams of something before memory; from which, indeed, memory sprung; something which is the source of reason, the unfathomable abyss of love, the mystery of thought, the creativeness of imagination. It dreams of all these as *coming from a source* which is not simply *now* in them, but *always was;* in which the past reaches backward until it fades before the eye as the depths of the sea fade. This is what is said in the ode of Wordsworth on "Immortality:" Our questioning of our Source is a dream of it, in a manner a *reminiscence* or presence of it in us. We come

"Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.
* * *
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither—
Can in a moment travel thither,
* * *
In the primal sympathy
Which having been, must ever be."

Here is a vast difference between Ethics and Religion. We see at once a difference by which Religion relates itself to an immense realm of thought and sentiment in human nature which not only *is* there, but must always continue to be there. With this, Ethics has no relation whatever. Both Religion and Ethics bring the human mind to the bar of the present; both set it face to face with the future; but Religion alone turns its face toward the past, by reason of that one mighty question, which, at least, is conceded to it if there be any reality in it at all, the question, "Whence come we? What is our source?"

Now, in *what way* are Ethics and Religion related to these three orders of time? In what different ways do they confront time by reason of their different natures?

Religion, so far as now we have defined it, looks into the past with *awe.* For its question of our source is at once inevitable and unanswerable. It *must* ask it; it must ask forever. In the asking lies all the answer. So Religion alone fronts the past.

But now, of both Ethics and Religion as to the present. To the present Ethics stands as related to the sphere of effort and of the direct scope of responsibility. Religion stands in the present with that same AWE with which it looks to the past; but to this is added by stress of present experience the sense of need, of dependence, of joy and of gratefulness. It looks at the present as a great sphere under an awful and also a benign sky, filled with sunshine, racked with storms. Man is a will and power, even a mighty power; he is also a creature tossed and torn ruthlessly by the tempests, and warmed and blest by the sunshine. These he makes not. He has sorrows and comforts, trials and strength, joys and bounding sense of being at home in the world. And the world he makes not. So both Ethics and Religion turn to the present; but Religion with a wonderful *awe* and *love*; and our Source in the past is conceived as one with our Dependence in the present.

To the *future* Ethics stands related as to the sphere of improvement, as giving scope for progress. Religion turns to the future with an *awe* to which now *trust* is added. For all the experience of the present with its bending sky of light as well as of storms, of joys as well as sorrows, and the sense of the unity of all in the one *Source* about which Religion must question,—this creates a trust that the same benefits, the same facts, the same right relations to human nature must go on. And so it trusts for to-morrow, and for next year, and for a life-time, and then, by a mighty leap of thought, for ten thousand and ten hundred thousand years.

Now, as yet, I think I have claimed nothing in Religion which flows not necessarily from its question, Whence come we? What is is our source? which we have conceded to be in Religion if it have any reality at all. But now I may take one more step in unfolding the contents of Religion, the only other one I shall take in this sermon; that step is this: Both Ethics and Religion regard "*the Good, the Beautiful and the True.*" Very interesting it would be to try to trace the coming of these ideas into mental experience, but that is an immense subject which only I can refer to here. Very interesting would it be to trace the essential oneness of the Good, the Beautiful and the True; to show not only the fact, but the reason thereof, that nothing is beautiful

which is not true, and that nothing can be true which is not good, and that nothing can be good which is not beauty. But this, also, is a theme by itself. However arising, or whatever the intimate relations between the Good, the Beautiful and the True, there they are, shining, glorious, commanding, alike in Ethics and in Religion.

Now, how do these two, Ethics and Religion, stand related to these great ideas? I answer thus: Man looks abroad into the field of nature and of human nature, and sees the Good, the Beautiful and the True as now radiant all about him in Being. He knows the glory and majesty of the heavens, the tender beauty of the earth and the melody and music of its streams, of its waving forests and of its rainfall, the splendor of its summer and the royal ermine of its winter dress, its immeasurable beauties both in the grand and minute. Standing also on the hill of knowledge, the gathered experience of many ages, and surveying the field of human history, he sees that rolling, deep and everlasting movement, the "stream of tendency," sweeping on resistlessly to conditions better and better, floating, bearing on and up all good and true things, covering and sinking in its depths, out of human sight and memory, the bad and wretched—a consistent and beautiful progress; an evolution of health and help and strength along the highway of human history.

Man looks also into his own ideality, which can be only the reflection of the infinite truth to which he is related, of that questioned and yet unquestionable source from which he springs; and there he perceives the PERFECT. He lives in the unimpeachable ideal; he dreams far beyond the experience of his imperfection; and the Good, the Beautiful and the True are ranged with the absolute, the Perfect, the Infinite and the Eternal. Hence arises *adoration*, with which Religion fills the *present* moment. Here we find the question asked by Religion, with which we started, which turned the face of Religion to the past, completed and glorified in *the direct sight* of the Beautiful, the Good and the True, now radiant in Being. Before this, man bends in adoration. He no longer looks backward with deep questioning; he no longer looks forward with so strenuous expectation. He is immersed, satisfied, glorified in the *now*, in

the Good, the Beautiful and the True, which are NOW, pressing on every sense, following every thought, glorifying every feeling, *here*, *now* shining in *Being*. And the Being and our Source are one.

But again, man looks into himself, not abroad, where the "stream of tendency" makes human history divine, and the majesty and the beauty make the heavens and the earth glorious; or even into his own ideality where the perfect is; but into himself as he lives day by day. There he sees the Good, the Beautiful and the True, not as an actuality save only in little part, not radiant as an all-containing fact, but only as a sense of what he was made for, and what he must strive to be. He perceives evil within him, failure, unfaithfulness, triumphs of selfishness, and all manner of wrong; but also he feels with these things the command, "These things thou shalt not be; thou art made to produce in thyself evermore the Good, the Beautiful and the True." Hence, Ethics contemplates the present but as a place of judgment, a point in direction, a condition for disapproval and for condemnation as well as for resolution and for courage. It turns to the future and works for it. It demands faithful service in the present moment, for the pursuit of the ideal which is to work out improvement for the next day, the next year, or the next century, and build up the Good, the Beautiful and the True in the individual character and in society. Religion is the adoration of the Good, the Beautiful and the True as *now* realized and radiant in Being. Ethics is adoration of the Good, the Beautiful and the True as *to be* realized *in us and by us*. Religion, by its question, Whence are we? What is our source? unites us with adoration to our good, beautiful and holy Source, and adores and worships the glory from which we come. Ethics points not at all to our Source, but to our destiny in character; to the end and aim of our active nature, and our duties thereby, and to the unfolding of the ideal by us.

Here I come, at last, to the definition of Religion which I said I should give in ending, and it is the definition which of all that ever I have thought or seen I love best to dwell upon. Religion is that which binds us back; binds us, that is, to our Source; the sentiment, the love, the reverence and awe, the adoration, the worship with which we meditate on that wonder of our own being, which is the same wonder spread all before

our eyes, and before our reason; the unutterable emotion with which we think by day or night, that in whatever condition we may be, involved in darkness, chained in sleep, busy in duties, we live and move and have our being in that wherein also our Source is. We go not afar; there is no place where it is possible to wander; there is no region where we are not at home.

Religion is that which binds us back, back evermore to our Source. Ethics or Morality points us ever forward.

Thus, I have tried to show that of Religion and Ethics each has its own province and end. I have tried to show this by their diverse relations to Time. If I have succeeeded in the attempt;—if, by taking as the meaning of Religion the simplest content which can be ascribed to it, namely, its question about our Source, I have shown that it alone relates us to one of the three orders of time, namely, the past, and if, still further, when I have added the element of devoutness toward the Good, the Beautiful and the True, (in devotion to which Religion and Ethics agree), I have shown that Religion stands wrapt in present adoration, in an unimpeachable experience of worshipfulness in present existence, while Ethics by equal necessity, points to the realization of the future,—then have I not shown a sphere of Religion in human experience which Ethics fills not. I think I have answered the question. At least, if my reasoning be true, it is answered; for then not one alone, whether it be Religion with its question toward the past, and finally with its worship which knows only the present moment, or Ethics with its primary insistance on present fidelity, but its ultimate pursuit of the conversion of the ideal into the actual,—not one of these alone, I say, but both are necessary to fill human life and answer its needs.

I would divorce nothing, either in experience or life, but like Wordsworth, take life all together, and

> "wish my days to be
> Bound each to each by natural piety."

Note—The reader will reflect that in this sermon I have not tried or wished to define Religion, but only to treat it in one of

its aspects or qualities, or, more exactly, in so much of meaning or content as at least must be conceded to it by reason of its primary question of the Source of us, and then its step to veneration and awe of the Good, the Beautiful and the True as instant in Being, the Being and our Source being one. Indeed, to question of our Source is itself an act of reverence. Beyond this I go not in this sermon. See on this point the note to the preceding sermon, "What is Religion?"

If Religion be veneration and awe for the Good the Beautiful and the True, I affirm that Religion philosophically (which is to say, rationally) is not possible to a speculative pessimist, and Religion actually is not possible to an actual pessimist. But Ethics is possible to both. For Ethics is summed in three points:—1. The primary absolute distinction between right and wrong, which is to say, the notion of duty as primary and elemental; 2. The duty of the individual to consider and judge carefully what is right and what is wrong; 3. The duty of the individual to act in accordance with his judgment, and to do what he believes to be right. Now, a pessimist may admit this Ethics. Philosophically he may admit it, for a universe which as matter of fact is bad, may not prevent an individual moral judgment against it, as is involved in the very affirmation that it is bad; and actually he may admit it, for a pessimist may live a good life and be an upright man. But Religion, I affirm, is not possible to a pessimist, because a bad universe can not excite love or veneration. Or to put it in other words, Religion is not conceivable in connection with despair. But Ethics is. For however bad the universe may be, an individual still may feel the duty to make the best of a bad thing and do what he can to make it as little evil as can be. It is true there seems some difficulty in such pessimistic judgment; for if the universe be bad in essence and a man good, he then must conceive himself as superior to the universe which has borne him, which is a strange thing. Or if the universe be good in essence, but inefficient and defective in power for the good, how happens it that the ideal and the power are not equal? But these are difficulties which inhere in pessimism, and not in my interpretation of it as regards Religion; and they inhere in it because it is a false philosophy, contrary to Religion, which is a true instinct or sentiment.

DOING AND KNOWING.

I.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching." —John vii, 17.

Long and often may we rejoice in this great saying of the Master. It is one of the two or three of his sayings which reach deepest down into the moral and spiritual life.

The scene of it is at Jerusalem at one of the festivals, the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus stood in the temple and taught. Many persons who listened, wondered, and said, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Which is to say, "How is this man able to expound aught, never having been taught by the Rabbins, and having no warrant from them? Jesus answered "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God or whether I speak from myself." Which is to say, "I have not been taught by learned men, it is true, but I have a voice or teaching in my soul, from God; and any man may have the same; for whoever will do the will of God, therewith knows the things of God." Or thus I may express it, "Whoso wills to do the will of God, shall know what is the will of God;" which is to say, "Whoso loves the right with singleness of heart, soon shall know the right."

This is a deep saying, nor ever has been said any deeper one concerning the moral center of the soul, that it is the abode of knowledge and the source of our ability to understand; in other words, that as the race is not to swift feet nor the battle to strong bodies, so knowledge is not to be obtained, like a stormed city, by mighty minds; no, but he only whose heart and life is

right shall know things as truly they are. By right heart and right life is meant this, a single-hearted love for the truth and desire for it, and a conforming of the behaviour to it so soon or so far as it be found.

This deep saying of the Master contains, then, the statement of the relation of morals to knowledge, and declares that knowledge rests on morals.

Now, knowledge may be taken in two kinds—

1. To know anything simply as a fact, that it is so and not otherwise. This I may call the religious form or manner of knowledge; for religion takes simply the fact as it is, and beholds the infinite power therein, and the eternal unfolding of it, with awe and faith.

2. To know anything in its principles, causes, relations, classifications, to comprehend, analyse and describe it. This I may call the intellectual form or manner of knowledge, wherein not merely the soul takes it with reverence but the intellect seizes on it to explore it.

Therefore, knowledge being of these two kinds, the Master's saying, which declares morals to be the root of knowledge, brings morals into relation with these two kinds of knowledge. This is to say that simple goodness (which the text calls the simple willing to do the will of God) underlies the religious apprehension of the facts which surround us, and also the intellectual comprehension of those facts. Or I may state it briefly thus—Simple faithfulness is the source of pure religious experience, and also of intellectual understanding.

In this sermon I shall speak only of the first part, pertaining to religious experience; in another, of the second part, the intellectual.

Here then is my subject in this sermon, namely, the relation of morals, that is, of simple dutifulness of heart and life, to religious experience.

Of course this is a wide subject, and a philosophic or abstract and theoretical subject, if so one please to treat it. Starting from this point, I might set forth on any one of very many paths of thought. But my whole purpose now is to say one thing clearly, one very great and valuable truth, namely, that religious experience, whether in thinking or feeling, comes

to naught, and often is worse than naught, an excitement, a gross deception or a more gross self-deception, unless it be founded deep in moral earnestness and a pure heart. But when the moral center is sound, the will earnest, desire noble, we shall find the earth very good soil for us, and the natural growth of it will be religion in the soul,—religious thought and religious feeling too, noble, beautiful, and sincere together.

Consider first the ease with which religious emotion may be excited. It is produced easily always. So easily indeed may a certain religious emotion, even unto ecstasy or frenzy, be produced, that very often, and I know not but commonly in assemblies, it rather is made and concocted by putting together and stirring up the materials of it, and roused thus by art into a kind of combustion,—rather thus it is *made*, I say, than springs up by nature, with the gentle and lovely fervor of nature's works in the soul. This is the profanity of revivals; and indeed I hold the revival meetings held by many churches and sects to be very profane; for the aim should not be to have them, but to need them not; and they should not be called the fruit of the Holy Spirit now, but the dire fermentations of the fruits of an evil spirit in the past loose and unholy days. Sad or profane is it thereupon to stir public heats of religious exultation, which flame up and go out, instead of hidden quietudes of penitence and resolve, which remain. And oh! how lightly then, and profanely, do they cast about from mouth to mouth the most hallowed thoughts, the most holy names, the most sacred experiences of the soul; which seems to me impious. We shall have indeed, as we must, our special seasons of feeling the love of God, says Theodore Parker, and "our several ways of expressing it." But "unhappy is the man or woman who tattles thereof, foaming at the mouth in some noisy conference, as in a village dog barks to dog; but blessed is he whose noiseless piety sweetens his daily toil, filling the house with the odor of that ointment; thrice blessed when it comes out in the character of the men whose holy lives, glistening with good deeds, adorn the land they also serve and heal and bless." Sometimes these sudden combustions of emotion as to religion do good, Parker avers, but commonly more evil. "Many thoughtful and moral men are disgusted with the folly and rant, and turn with contempt

from everything that bears the name of religion; and the most painful forms of infidelity and atheism are sure to come,—a lack of confidence in any higher law, in a creating Cause and preserving Providence that guides the world." Heats and wrangling flames of religion, he says again, sometimes rebuke certain vices and passions; and it is well, lacking a nobler way, that "by the iron knout of fear these should be scourged into subjection." "But alas!" he says, "worse vices—the lust of money, of power, of distinction, the vices of old men, men of hard heads and stony hearts, spiritual pride, self-conceit, arrogance, bigotry, hate,—these are left in full strength."

Religious emotions, like all unpainful feelings, are pleasures, and these may become excessive luxury, indulgence, intoxication. They yield a passing excitation, or a soothing which too often is but a blunting of the moral judgment. There appear natures to whom religious contemplation becomes like the idle luxury of a dream, fanned, as in the old Grecian idea of heaven, with western zephyrs of soft feeling and a delicious waiting upon half-born aspirations which die at once. By such flushes of feeling a pleasurable glow is spread over the body and soul, but promoting no high thoughts, nor ending in noble deeds.

Moreover, our experience of nature and life, unless true moral earnestness unite therewith, tends subtly to arouse inefficient emotion in religion. Joys, prosperities, sorrows, pain, evil, helplessness, weariness, overwork, the beauty, benevolence, power and grandeur of the Universe, conspire to evoke emotion. These, indeed, are wise and loving appeals to our religious nature. But unless the sense of right be alive in us and duty be mighty, these attractions and influences will cradle us but not glorify us.

So easy is emotion in religion, so pleasurable, so feasible!

But it is just contrariwise with the moral nature. *This* is not enticed forth; *this* is not a play and lapping of glowing emotions; this is not an easy run-forth of pleasure and exultation. Morality is exercise and drill. The moral force is resisted continually, is fallen on, and not seldom overthrown, by passions, open or ambushed, by desires, ambitions, seductions, low standards in life,—a host of enemies and temptations; and

never the moral nature prevails without energy, often not without battle,—not seldom a conflict long and severe. Right living indeed has been called immemorially a battle. "Gird ye to the battle," "Quit ye like men, be strong," "Put on the whole armor of God," these are the precepts of the prophets. It is no little hard thing even to do no evil; yet this is but a poor virtue. But to do good, to sacrifice ourselves for mankind, to constrain ourselves for the world's sake, to live a large domain of our lives for others, to bear much and keep a sweet cheer in the face and faith in the heart, to be poor and not be envious, to be neglected and not grow suspicious or bitter, to stand against ridicule, to inquire what we ought to live for, and go about life with earnest purpose to make beauty and love of it, and do this day by day, steadily, unswerved, for long years while reward is deferred and difficulties multiply and the long pressing weight of them grows very heavy—this is very hard indeed, this is a great battle. Therefore it is that moral greatness is so very great, because it is achieved against so much resistance; for then strength is the price of victory and still more strength the fruit of it.

Even in the life of the body there seems to be somewhat like to this moral life which grows strong by resistance overcome. A great physician once grew very eloquent to me about the resistance which continually exercises the body and thereby makes it live. Observe, he said, that the forces of nature and our external conditions, when once life mysteriously springs in them, all seem hostile to life, and so foster it to lift and bear itself against resistance. How grows the power and compactness of the muscles of the arm? By no other way then by exercise, which is the tug of the muscle against a resistance. So grows all vital power whatever. A thousand destructive agents, mixed with the air and with food, compounded by the very processes of the body and by every appliance of social existence, continually exercise physical life. Life thereon gains its very energy from the effort put forth in throwing off poisons. Life, said the physician, is inconceivable if there were naught for it to do to maintain itself. It is like a strong warrior, possible only when there are enemies. So grows it and so enlarges, till its natural cycle and course be run, and it stands atop of its career and of its force. Then begin the foes gradually to prevail. They

overcome the present shell of life, and wear it out. The soft death of old age results, and all is peace and passage. So is the moral life also. There are contesting poisons in its atmosphere by which it is exercised to grow. A moral life with naught to do to maintain itself, is inconceivable. But a host of appetites troop in to do it battle. Often the battle is hard; but the strength of every foe overcome passes into virtue of the will.

Now is it not plain that this noble acquisition, this victory which is true moral character, must underly religious feeling if that be to be lifted and sanctified? Without the moral conquest, what else can emotion be but indulgence, pleasure, sensation? What right have we, or what dignity, to enter joys and hopes and trust which have no moral endeavor, no noble war of will, under them? If there be no devoutness of will, no moral earnestness, religious feeling is dissipation.

Here, then, I find the first depth in the Master's words, "If ye will do the will of God, ye shall know of the teaching." The religious life rests, for its truthful uplift of feeling on the moral life; because emotion in religion may come and go as easily as a chattering concourse of birds; but right living is a noble battle. The thought of God, and all the joy, hope, trust, faith, love, that therewith arise, are to be known as their true nature is, and entered into in very truth, only as we will to do the Holy and Eternal Will.

The glory of the Universe of God is a holy glory. It is truth and truthfulness, right and righteousness. Glorious and beautiful are the heavens and the earth, "like a flag unfurled,"

> "The splendor of the morning sky
> And all the stars in company!"

But "my soul says, 'There is more than this!'" Beautiful are the shapes and colors of forest and field; but it is a holiness of beauty which "has pulled around itself the bark of every tree." God is seen in greatest glory in the faithfulness of his creatures. The love and obedience of a dog—that inextinguishable worship—has more glory in it than the Milky Way, and is a visibility of God more distinct than mountains. The murmurous invincible trust of a lion once gained by kindness, the appealing sorrow of a polar bear whose cub has been killed, are more sweet than the

rhythm of the sea, and an audibility of God more distinct than "the music of the spheres." And one deed of pure self-sacrifice, of moral warfare, in a man, affords us a greater beholding and hearing of God than all the poems of Bibles and all the geological "scriptures writ in stone." Says Fichte in his "Way to the Blessed Life," "God appears in what a good man does, lives and loves. No longer then is the Eternal encompassed by shadows nor hidden by a garment, but is visible in his own immediate life. We ask 'What is God?' and the question is unanswerable from empty and imaginary conceptions; but in the life of a good man the answer is given, 'God *is* that which a devout creature of his, thereby inspired by him, does.'"

In a passage of singular beauty and elevation, John Weiss has the same great thought: "In a visit to scenes where grandeur is clothed with charm, and all the elements of a perfect landscape appeal to all the senses, I must confess that I have been impressed with some moral attributes of humble persons, notwithstanding the importunities of Nature. There is a place where the mountains escape directly from the ocean, to lift the eye into a wide horizon; yet they bare their bosoms to the surf, and flatter out of it fine rhythm for the ear. The slopes of old forests send down their green to compete with the waves. The caverns that have been gnawed out of the coast-line by the patience of thousands of years, attract the step away from the glens, where the shadows fall from old birches and needles of the pine. The paths that the ships make upon their various errands do not seduce the fancy to follow, any more than the tracks which the woodcutter has hewed through the wilderness of green. By both roads your delight travels from point to point through spaces that are inhabited by constant surprises; and your heart learns to soar like the eagles that hint good omens to you from the heights on which their instinct launches them. You sail in their company, and are masters of the beauty of the land and sea. Their motion soothes your care, as the lapse of the mountain torrents that pass through you with murmur of forgetfulness of the heat of politics and all low things. Every nerve of your body learns in an instant to transmit such news as never flashes along the lines of the telegraph. And the gladness of your soul

is worship. For when the day is built upon a large scale, as it can be in regions where material enough is at hand to make a dozen landscapes, and more beauty than the whole dozen could afford, short of bankruptcy, the first and most jubilant thought of the mind is that God is making the world afresh for you, and has taken one of his splendid mornings to do it in, and is pronouncing through you that he finds it good. If your eyes fall before this frankness, and for relief you begin to pick the ground berries, they do not allay but stimulate your thirst for the sweetness of being at home with God, and you lift your face again with the whole lifting of the sea and the solemn mountains up to the divine countenance, to receive its morning kiss. It would be contemptible to undervalue such pure moments. But there is no treason in confessing that if one moral attribute come athwart such scenes, it throws them into shadow, and you are conscious that an invisible presence, a messenger of the love in which earth's grandeur was conceived, is passing by.

So I thought, when a boy, who had never seen the inside of school or meeting-house, had never read Paley's or Wayland's ethics, and did not know how far he lived from Boston, described to me how the foxes and raccoons made a beaten path in the snow, from the winter-stricken mountains, directly through his father's garden down to the seaside, to go foraging for waifs and strays; and that not one of the family ever thought of setting a trap in the way of their necessities, to make money out of their famine. What delicacy of the moral sense, nestled underneath that ragged jacket and that raggeder intelligence. The boy's father did not know enough to estimate the heights of the mountains where God's wild creatures lived, yet he had transmitted to his children the beauty of not taking advantage of a fox's hunger to stock his cottage with peltry. And my conscience rose to spring-tide with the conviction that the temple was not out of doors, but was underneath a jacket, and was not made with hands. Moral things are unobtrusive, and make as little noise as the light does in blushing on the mountain's forehead; but, like the light, they announce God's coming to take possession of the day."

DOING AND KNOWING.

II.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."—John, vii, 17.

I resume the subject of moral life in relation to religious feeling, treated in my last sermon.

I said, in that sermon, that emotion in religion is brought forth very easily; that therefore it runs the danger of being made by devices and excitements instead of being a natural slow and beautiful growth; that, contrariwise, moral worth, right living is difficult, a hard and long battle, a strenuous strife; and that therefore goodness of life must go with, and even fore-go, emotion in religion,—the base and ground of the edification, the rock; on which founded, the temple will out-stand all storms and the daily hammering of time. This, I said, was one of the deep reasons why he that doeth the will of God is he who shall know the things of God; because a kind of revel or abandonment in the thought of God, (ah! impious! a mournful thing!) is easy, and often verily a seduction; but to do His Will is hard—a watch, an undertaking, a travail; and the strong discipline of morals is the condition and means of true apprehension of God and of health of feeling in religion. Without this, emotion is but vapors, even perhaps unholy fumes in riotous company.

I come now to another great depth of this deep teaching of the Master.

There is a great law of our constitutions which expresses the dependence of the religious on the moral. That law is the law governing all active exertion on the one hand, and all passive emotion on the other hand. I may call it the law of passivity and activity. The law is this, that in emotions we are passive,

being merely acted on, subjected to impressions, affected by passing conditions or circumstances; that, contrariwise, in any exercise of the will we are active, acting on others or on conditions, producing impressions on others or on circumstances; that all emotions, because we are only passive objects of them, tend to decrease in power by repetition, so that the more they prevail the weaker they grow, and therefore the less tending to come vigorously into consciousness; that, contrariwise, all exercises of will, because in them we are not objects of impressions but active agents, tend to increase in power by repetition, so that the more they are transacted the stronger they grow, and tend the more to assert themselves in action and to be repeated. This is the law of passivity and activity. To state it briefly, emotions, as being passive impressions, fade and weaken by repetition; but active exercise of will strengthens by repetition. Both passive affections and active efforts, emotion and volition, feeling and willing, become *habits* by repetition of them; but just in proportion as we drift into a feeling by habit, it is listless, flaccid, ceases to be a great and strong feeling; but, contrariwise, when acts of will become habits, it is because they have grown so strong by exercise that they run over oppositions like a tide and are put forth almost unconscious of any resistance, although at first the resistance taxed the strength. In brief, passive habits are weakness, but active habits are strength; in other words, emotions that become habits, do so because the emotion weakens; but exercises that become habits, do so because the will strengthens.

This law pertaining to active effort and passive affections, takes a very benevolent part in Providence, preventing much pain. There are persons, like physicians, nurses, charity agents, who are called, by a sympathetic nature or by professional duty, to be familiar with scenes of suffering. The emotions of sympathy, pity, horror, aroused in such scenes may be exceeding painful. They may amount to a piercing distress, a torment of memory, a shock and horror which fill the mind, seize the imagination, and become harrowing sympathies continually arising. Very like such a person is prompted at first to seek out and relieve the sufferer by his own sympathetic distress. This distress may be so great that he has no harder task than to witness the suffering during his efforts to relieve it. What if these emotions

of pity and horror relaxed never, never weakened, but always continued to be strong torments? Who then could endure a life passed in these benevolent professions or in works of mercy? Or if, by love and self-sacrifice, one clung to the work, what a terrible life-long martyrdom, in which so severe an anguish should be repeated with every act of duty! But now comes this law of the passive affections and the active powers, to work a most merciful benefit. The pangs of sympathetic pity, horror, terror, are passive affections. Therefore the sympathetic suffering of those who minister to pain and wretchedness gradually extinguishes itself. With every repetition of the brave duty, the painful emotions attending it grow less. But is this a hardening of heart? No. It would be so, and the whole nature become callous and dense, but for the other side of the law, which works in the active powers. When the fellow-feeling of pain, the sympathetic distress, which is a potent excitement to merciful occupations and hard labors, should grow weak by experience of it, what would become of the helpless sufferers and who would be moved to toil for their relief, if the active exertions of relief were not confirmed and established by repetition in proportion as the sympathetic pain is weakened? But it *is* confirmed, and becomes a noble habit. Thus the law provides that human suffering shall be ministered to and relieved, but with less and less distress to the faithful workers among the wretched; so that a charitable or professional laborer amid diseases and distresses is eased of severe pangs of sympathetic misery, but is confirmed in his labor to relieve the wretchedness. With every new deed of merciful duty, the suffering of sympathy grows less, and more tolerable, but the habit and power of will to do the benefit grows more confirmed and imperious. Ever more and more the benevolent worker is spared suffering, and the active habit of succoring distress takes the place of painful pity in defending the sufferer from neglect.

Now if this law of the passive affections and the active powers be understood, we will apply it to the relations of the moral nature and the religious nature. Religious feeling is a passive affection, a succession of emotions, perhaps excitements, fervencies, agitations, ecstasies, in which the soul puts forth no effort. We have no part in these excited states or emotions but sufferance or consciousness of them. According to the law of

passive affections, therefore, these feelings, fervors, desires, being unfollowed by action or labor, are weakened with every repetition of them, every self-surrender to them. But when they take outward shape in forms, expressive actions, attendance on assemblies, practice of observances, and many acts by which religious emotions seek to impart and enforce themselves, these are acts of will, of intention and decision, and therefore, according to the law of the active powers, are confirmed and compacted by every exercise of them. Every repetition, therefore, of emotions in religion, with accompanying actions or observances, tends to a weakening of the spirit and a confirming or solidifying of the form or observance, just as every instance of the physician's duty tends to a weakening of his feeling for the sufferer but a confirming of his exertions to relieve the suffering. But the desirableness of the effects in the two cases, is very different. It is well, and to be desired thankfully, that the physician should wane and attenuate in his inward sensitiveness to misery, while his outward tendency to relieve it is confirmed and enlarged in the same degree. But, all contrariwise, in religious experience, it is the force and purity of the feeling which is precious and to be preserved by every means, while the outward acts or forms in which the emotion utters itself are the unimportant, transient and changeable part which ought not to be emphasized in comparison. Yet it is just this external and unimportant part which is confirmed and set forward, by violence of emotions in religion and by frequent excitation of them, while the inward fact, the spirit, life, truth, earnest and deep feeling, wanes in the same measure. The law is very simple. By repetition, the emotion, which is the passive affection, is weakened, the form or expression, which is the active exercise, is confirmed.

Hence revivals, gotten up to act like stimulants on flagging and flaccid emotions. Hence also dead forms, which once were the expansion of living and truthful feeling, but now have become lifeless practices, like mummies, once bodies of life, now equally bodies, but embalmed in the preservatives and shrouds of habit.

Such is the sure tendency and fate of resort to emotion in religion by itself and as something to be sought in itself. The inefficient observances or forms will become habit, the life gradually wane and fade away, leaving behind it a dim memory which often becomes superstition.

But now look at this same law as it has effect in moral experience. We shall find that morality, by this law, fares otherwise than religious emotions and forms, indeed just contrariwise. The moral experience is like to the religious expression in this, that there are two parts to it, the part of feeling and the part of action. But they differ in the relative value of the parts which are confirmed by exercise; for in religious emotions and expression of them, it is the unimportant part, the form, which grows into consequence and power, but in moral experience, it is the important part. A moral experience includes an emotion or impulse or reverence unto the right; perhaps at the same moment there is also a strong desire unto the wrong; then there is inward struggle. That is the emotional part, the part of passive affection, in which the mind simply is conscious of emotions seizing on it. On that follows the deed, the coming of emotion into outward form and sensible existence, a right deed or a wrong deed, according to the nature of the inward emotion which has prevailed, whether the reverence for the right or the desire for the wrong. That is the active part, in which the will has exercise and domain. In every moral experience, these two parts, the passive part and the active part, are combined. Now, it is true that in every instance of moral experience, the passive affection, which is the conscious impulse or desire unto some especial righteousness, whatever it be, is weakened as an emotion, by the recurrence of it; but in the same moment and measure the outward moral act is confirmed and established by every repetition of it; and when the moral act is one of faithfulness and right, the habit of that excellence grows in the same measure as the conscious emotion unto it declines. Wherefore, in the domain of good and steadfast moral action we behold this divine beauty, namely, that intensity of loyalty and longing unto the right and good, if diminished by recurrence of those feelings, is diminished only in proportion as the right and good are realized and put forth in action. The longing to be and do right, in the healthy conscience, ceases as a conscious motive,—as an expenditure of force, shall I say?—but only to be stored up as reserved power and confirmed action in the whole being, an efficient and unthwarted streaming of the being to the right and good, even deep below the surface of consciousness. This is the highest concep-

tion of moral force, the doing of good but knowing it not; knowing it not because then we are acting out not a desire or emotion, but the emotion transformed into a habit of action, which is to say, into a deep stream of will, a settled and vital nature. This is the exact opposite of the result of emotion and the expression thereof in religion sought for themselves and in themselves; they forever are translating the inward into the outward, the feeling, or life, into the form; but moral faithfulness forever is translating the outward into the inward, the action into very power and being.

But now you will say to me perhaps, Must all emotion fade by its own exercise? Must religious feeling, once called forth, weaken and decline thereafter with the recurrence of it? Are we doomed thus to have our most exalted feelings, our noblest raptures, grow apathetic, lifeless, inefficient, by our very experience of them? Is to feel them the same thing as to begin to feel them not? And is it so, too, with human love? Must its joy and rapture run a fatal course toward indifference? Must the path of all feeling be a downward grade to impassiveness?

Yes, if unaccompanied by moral action; but if associated with ethical activity, no!

Here comes to view another strange and beautiful fact or law within us, to wit: *Painful* feelings that come of love, the distresses of sympathy, tend to wane by exercise and repetition of them, whereby we are spared suffering, while the charitable active faithfulness, confirmed to a strong habit, takes the place of the sympathetic distress as a motive power for the relief of the unhappy. But *the joys* of love, which are trust, hope, tenderness, gratefulness, are *fed*, not replaced, by moral action. In all ways the sweetness and richness of love is more and better by reason of good deeds of love done and grown into a habit of inventing and applying benefits to our beloved. The divine joyful feelings of love die not nor wane by immersion of us in them unless unconnected with active service. But *then* they wane and perish surely. I am persuaded that very much of the most sad sorrows and pains in the world come from the ignorance of all kinds of lovers, or else their thoughtlessness, or else an indolent quality of love (if then it can be called love), by all which reasons the love begins and ends in emotions, in ecstasies, in soft suffusions of

feeling. 'Tis certain, by the law ruling in all passive affections, that these will wane by exhaustion if there be no source of supply and invigoration of them beyond the mere effusion and swelling of themselves. Hence those loves that begin and end in the passage through the soul of soft emotions, glowings, ardors, flushes of feeling, will wane, and burn down to ashes by inexorable law. It is only active service of one's beloved, energy in considering, procuring and applying help, weal, profit, benefit and blessings in love's behalf, that can feed and support the delicate and beautiful raptures of affection. Let all who live together in houses beware!

So it is with religious feeling. Of itself it will wane, waste and wither under recurrence; the law is upon it. But it is *fed* by moral energy. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments," said Jesus; but conversely it is true—"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall be able to love me." Love of God will dry and perish if it drink not of the spring of obedience to God. The grace, fervor, truth of the inward love, especially its continuance as a sublime power at need, can be maintained only by the force and sincerity of outward action. And for this great office, to be the well-spring of the joy and rapture of feeling which else would wane by its own exercise,—for this office moral energy is sufficient. For not only is moral power noble in all instances, but it may grow from more to more continually, and be ever the increasing source of a more glorious emotion. For always there will be work enough to tax the will. How strong soever it grow by victories won and heights climbed, always there will be new "holy wars" to be waged, always new heights to be attained of virtue, power and knowledge.

Here then we behold again a depth in the Master's words, "If any man willeth to do the will of God, he shall know of the teaching." Religious feeling, and therewith knowledge, unto the being of God, his glory in the out-world, his light in the soul, his presence in both, is to be kept in health and strength, yea, in life, only by moral action. To will to do the Eternal and All-holy Will is the one way unto knowledge of the Eternal and Infinite Love. We shall call unto Duty with a strong voice; yea, weary with the "unchartered freedom" of emotions, call with vehement voice, and say with the poet,—

"Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face;
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens through thee are strong."

DOING AND KNOWING.

III

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."
John vii, 17.

In two foregoing sermons I have spoken from this deep saying of the Master.

In the first discourse I spoke of the easiness of religious emotion, and, contrariwise, the hard exercise of daily goodness of life; consequently, the dangers and delusions of emotion unless "encamped about" with moral vigor and action.

In the second discourse I spoke of the diminishing and vanishing of emotions, if they be repeated often, by reason of the law of our nature that passive affections fade under frequent recurrence of them, while active exercise of will settles into strength by repetition of it, and becomes a habit of power; consequently, the impossibility of maintaining emotions, religious or other, in strength and beauty, without an attendant action of will putting them forth into service and virtue.

I will go on now, in this sermon, to a third force or depth in the Master's saying.

The great truth is that it is by goodness of act that we shall have abundant and clear knowledge. Or say it thus, To do rightly is the way to know correctly. Or in these words, To see things as truly they are, comes by moral virtue more than by force of intellect. Or again thus, Nobleness of life in the soul is the condition of wide scope of understanding. Or thus, True knowledge is an ethical achievement, not intellectual. Or, best of all, as Jesus put it simply, "He that wills to do His will shall know"; and elsewhere, "The pure in heart shall see God."

This deep truth rests on the principle that we can know only

those things which we are like unto, and can have understanding only of what we share in our own nature. If a man have a small measure of harmony in him, then can he know but that little of music; and if he have so small portion as not even to perceive any sounds, but is deaf, then he can know naught of music. So of light, and of all things that pertain to the senses. Likewise equally of love and truth and beauty and thankfulness, and all things that pertain to the spirit. Only if *we* be loving shall we see love in Nature and among men. In like manner we must be like God in order to know the things that come of God. But all things come of God, all things have their place and power and subjection and permission in his Providence, all things are made in his Life, Presence and Overruling, "and without him was nothing made that was made." Therefore if we must be like God in order to understand the things that come of God, we must be like him in order to understand anything and know anything as truly it is.

Goodness, justice, truthfulness, devotion, sincerity, self-control, faithfulness, honesty, righteousness,—I will gather all these into one term, namely, *ideality*. By ideality I mean the pursuit of high things, the good, the beautiful and the true, *without thought of reward*. For if you will look at each of these virtues, you will see that it cannot exist at all except purely and without mixture of anything with it. If justice be done for a reward, it is not justice but craft; if one tell the truth for an advantage, then the truth-telling is not truthfulness, but a barter; if one be devoted to a person or cause for guerdon, it is not devotion but shrewdness; if one be sincere for an end, it is not sincerity but subtlety; if one be honest for policy, it is not honesty but strategy. So that it is plain that all these virtues are but the many forms of purity of heart, and will bear to be naught else; but with any mixture they cease to be. Divine singleness of nature is common to them all, and is the being of them. Therefore I may gather all these virtues, as I have said, under one name, which is ideality; because ideality is the following after spiritual things without thought of any other reward by them, or for anything but their own grace and divinity.

Now, let us suppose the Universe to be framed on this

ideality, and builded on it; suppose creation to come forth from virtue, from pure and simple holiness, as itself the one life and reward, the source, aim, end and recompense in one, all else merely secondary and by the way, and not much to be labored for by the way, and the ideal never to be given up for anything because holiness in itself is divine, and enough, and all; so that if there be pains and privations fallen on the good, 'tis no overthrow of faith or of courage, because to be good is the supreme reward of the good, and having this crown we can "both hope and quietly wait"; suppose this to be so, and that Creation so hath come forth and so is builded, how can this be seen, known and felt by one who has not that ideality, but is seeking the rewards, and doing right only for what may come of it to him?

Now, such truly is the Universe. And who can tell what a stranger in a strange land the seeker of rewards must be? He is homeless, not because he is away from his home, but because no place is his home. For it is not this or that place which is strange to him, but all the creation of God is to him a strange country, being made and framed in one manner and he in another manner all contrary to it; creation a breaking forth from the Supreme, Perfect, Ideal, Holy, for the unfolding of itself in beauty; and he no more than a runner after rewards, a seeker after gains.

Surely, now, it is plain that any one whose aims are low, selfish, individual, who in every act is thinking what payment he shall make out of it or what advantage it shall become to him, can not understand truly a universe framed so differently, and in a way that so is opposed to him and against him. He will not judge well; he will not see things as truly they are and in their real order; because he is not like them, but made as if of another creation that has no part in this one. It is certain that he must be ignorant. If he pile up all arts, letters, learning, still he will be ignorant. If he amass all sciences and philosophies, still he will be ignorant. If he know all affairs, powers, principalities, revenues, commerce, governments, still he will be ignorant. For he will know all things only as they appear to him, and they will seem to him to be dispensers of rewards and servants of advantage. He cannot see them as truly they are, because they are singing and praising and serving goodness,

beauty and truth for the pure divinity of them. I say that one can not understand the whirling of the spheres, their dance before the Lord, who knows not "that gravitation is identical with purity of heart." In a good universe it is only the good man that can have knowledge of it, and see truly how the parts and members in it agree, and mingle, and act one on another, and act all together. The bad man could be wise and knowing, and see things as truly they were, only in a bad universe, like to himself. Only the soul that loves the truth devoutly and for itself, and will not sell it, but cleaves to it and bears witness to it, though it "find him poor at first and keep him so;" that can find a joy in high thoughts, spiritual visions, great humane hopes; that can sacrifice and meet loss for such things; that lives with ideality, believes in the might of simple truth and beauty, and asks not to be rewarded but purely rejoices to adore and to serve,—only this soul can know well the things and laws and powers of this universe which is of God. This is the Master's saying, that 'tis he who wills to do the will of God that shall know of the teaching.

Now if a man live not with high thoughts for their own sake, not with the idealities of things, but with questions of advantage to himself, judging things not by their nature, ideally, but by the praise or fashion of the time, or by what gain or repute he can make of them, I say he will be ignorant of the truth of things. This he must be, because creation is framed not so, but builded all contrary to him, on the eternal divinity of the good, the beautiful and the true. Thereupon his ignorance will have effect in two ways:

First, he will misjudge the individual things and persons which come in his way and encompass him. He will not know what simplicity is, but call it somewhat else, perhaps dulness or folly or affectation. If there be a noble cause struggling against apathy, ease, caste, he will not know it to be noble, but call it infatuate or seditious. He will not know devotion, self-sacrifice, singleness of motive if he meet it, but will conceive some current of self-interest or plots under the surface and will go far astray looking for them. He will not know the goodness of any good thing that not yet has grown strong to drag a large company after it. Thus he will miss the best things because he

will not know them, and continually will misjudge and cry "crucify" where he ought to trust and love.

Secondly, he will know naught of Providence. May not such ignorance as now I speak of, be one great reason of unrest and faultfinding with Providence. I hear very much said about the problems of life because of the inequalities of it. Some are so rich and some so poor; and many are rich with little work, and many are poor though they labor hard. Some persons have lives of rich rewards and honey-dew to the end; some begin in hardship or loneliness and never straighten the back from its burden till they and their loads fall together. "The distribution of the good things of life," it is said, is all awry, unequal, inconsiderate, sorrowful and painful.

Now who can deny that there are injustices, puzzling oppressions, hard conditions, wrongs, which we are to work at and set right? But, to the idealist, are these things *problems of Providence?* Are the present distributions of rewards to be cast as reproaches on the holy order of Creation? Blots on the love of God? Who can think such a thing, if he live in the plane of the ideal? For in this plane, what are rewards? They are but the things by the way, which *we* must learn to undertake and do wisely withal, and spread abroad justly and kindly. But they are not the offices and recompense of God, neither to be considered in the divine endowment of us; for goodness and truth and beauty are their own recompense, and they admit not any taint of any reward for them, or any other glory and greatness beside themselves. Therefore what if the distribution of pleasant things be yet deficient and unequal on this earth? What has this to do with holy Providence? Let *us* look to it, becoming just and loving, and learning better to equalize conditions. But in the presence and love of God, there is no apportioning of rewards unto the good, the beautiful and the true; but the recompense of beauty is the greatness of the beauty thereof, and of goodness the goodness, and of truth the truth, and the power of them to confer knowledge and to enlighten the eyes to see things as truly they are, and therein to see God. Therefore it is only one, I think, who squanders and wrecks his soul upon rewards, that will complain of Providence. Says a high and solemn teacher:

"The life of the called is not a happy life, if happiness con-

sists in selfish enjoyment; nevertheless it is a blessed life, if blessedness consists in consciously filling a place in the army of the faithful, and the fellowship of that spirit which animates all the brave and good. The limits of enjoyment are soon reached, the season of enjoyment is soon past; but life and blessedness have no bounds. The time is near when the having possessed a little more or a little less of this world's goods, the having experienced a little more or a little less of earthly delights, will be no longer matter of pleasure or regret. But the consciousness of having paid with our best for values received, of having borne our share of the common burden, and contributed something to the general good, will be rich compensation in view of all the past, and ample support in view of all the future; will be a satisfaction which we can take with us to our final rest, assured that the sundering of soul and body cannot wrest this treasure from our life, and that wherever in the Divine economy our waking may be, it will find us sound and furnished and girt and ready for the new career."*

So far I have spoken of the holiness of God. Now also we have the love of God to think of. This too we must be like, if we will know the things that come of him.

God is not and lives not for himself, but to give himself. Deeply and well sang the ancient poet. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." *In the beginning.* He could not be *alone.* In the beginning it was so; from eternity it was so. Not for himself or with himself or alone could he be, but for the bringing forth of creation and his creatures, for joy and goodness to them, and perfecting of them. This is love.

Now, if in truth the Universe be framed on this nature and purpose; if verily creation come forth from this virtue and be builded on this nature and accord in all things with this purpose, of living not for oneself but for others, and each for all in love; if indeed this be so, how then is it possible that one who is selfish and unloving can know the things of creation as truly they are?

Now, such truly is the Universe, a creation of love, eternal love, almighty and inevitable love. And who can tell what a stranger in a strange land the unloving and selfish person must be? He must

*Dr. Frederick H. Hedge, in "Sermons."

be ignorant, like a man cast on a foreign shore or dropped through the sky from one world to another where even the structure of the body and the parts and gestures are unlike to his own. If he collect all knowledges, arts, influences, strategies, still he will be ignorant. If he be skilled in all tools, instruments, computations, still he will be ignorant. No matter what learning or cunning of head or hand he has, lacking love and void of the devotion of himself unto others, he will be ignorant, he can not know the nature of the things that are about him. In Paul's great song-chapter, 'tis so he exalts the wisdom which is love,—"If I speak with tongues of men and of angels, and if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." In the Universe of Him who could not be alone, whose name is Love, the creation builded in the image of service and of devotion, of the affectionate going forth of one member unto another and of God unto all, the man whose look is turned on himself in most, unloving unto others, is unlike to the frame of creation, and he can not know it. Only the soul which is a wide and tender fellowship, which hath a great love for men, which is moved by the sight of the creatures of the earth, which turns unto others with benefits and consolation, and gives not of substance only but itself, which rejoices deeply in all welfare of men and creatures and labors for it, to spare pain and make joy,—only this soul can know well the things and laws and powers of this Universe of love, which is of God who could not be alone. This is the Master's saying, that 'tis he who wills to do the will of God that shall know of the teaching.

Now, if a man be turned only to himself, unloving, selfish, not thinking of others' good, to spend himself for them, but of his own advantage, to save himself for himself, and thus he be ignorant of the truth of things, as he must be, because creation is framed not so, but all contrary to him, then, as before we observed in the man whose soul is bent and bowed down to rewards, his ignorance will have effect in two ways:

First, he will not know the individual things and creatures which come in his way; he will not conceive their nature as it is.

The good and sweet things of life and earth are rolling forth

continually, like clouds from a full-dewy air. Sleep and waking, the "fiery oes" of night, the blue and silver sky of day and the opening of the door of the furnace of the sun, strength of limb, deep inhalations, quick senses and the foods of them, delicious sounds of water—rain, brook, sea—of æolian murmurs over tree-tops, of carolings of airy feathered throats, the "hum of bees" and noon-tide drone of insects, "the lowing herd," the halloo of children, the music of pipes and song; lovely sights and scenes, land vistas, water vistas, mountains, colors, shadows, fair outlines, graceful shapes, pictures, splendors of light and of contrast; comforts and good pleasures of body, shelter, fire, lavatories, tables, grains all wholesome and delicate, fruits of radiant bloom and vivacious juices, wine and oil and milk and honey,—all these roll forth and come to us unceasingly. But who can know them, being unloving? For these are God's love. One is ignorant of them who is turned unto himself, for these are God's turning of himself unto all creatures. How should he who is unloving and turned unto himself know truly, as they are, the things which are the eternal effluence of love? He can not. He will not see their nature nor hear their language, nor know how they agree and work together, nor how they relate unto his own body and soul; nor will he awake to the thanksgiving which belongs with them; because he is unloving unto others and thinking of himself.

But not only these good and delicious things of earth, but also admirable creatures and beautiful persons surround him, like a rich company in a garden. Among them good deeds and kind affections go back and forth like carrier doves, and even they are offered unto him. But he will not know love when he beholds it. He can not. He has not the figure of it in himself. He will not know it, but call it somewhat else, perhaps self-interest or fatuity or fond folly. Therefore the nature and exaltation of persons will pass him by unknown; because, though he have wit like Jove, he has not heart as a child. He will not know life as truly it is, nor the hearts of men as they are.

Secondly, he will know naught of Providence. For consider. Amid all the strains and clamors of life, the pains, losses, wishes, inequalities of which before I spoke, a very vast portion of Providence turns on the supports and joys of human love. This

element is so great that it overturns all appearances, and cries out to us to move cautiously in judgment. For no gilding or fine hangings show where the true riches are; but in a palace there may be the most wretched poverty with groanings that can not be uttered, and in the small hut a most rich content, an affluence of life; because love is not in the mansion, but is in the bare little dwelling. Let anxieties and labors, privations and small portions, humble estate and poverty, pelt as they may, and pile like hail stones where they have fallen, and yet all these may be overborne, and made as but manly trials, and lightened till their weight has fled into the sky, by love and a dear companionship and precious sharing together of souls that are one. Therefore who can say how ignorant of Providence and how little knowing of the resources and ways of God with human hearts is the man who has not love in himself, nor knows in himself the sweetness of turning devoutly unto another in love, nor that other sweetness of being turned unto with trust and love? He can not know the things of the Providence of God. The light of the ways of God with men must be darkness unto him; because he is blinded to the vast sum of joys and the supports of soul which arise in the love of men. This is the Master's saying, that 'tis he who wills to do the will of God that shall know the teaching; or thus, 'Tis only he that hath become like unto God, and so far as he is like, that shall know the ways of God. This is another deep and great meaning in this deep saying of the Master.

Is it any wonder that Providence so much is complained of among men and such reproach thrown on the love of God? For how can his ways be seen or creation be known as truly it is, by one who is bent and bowed unto rewards, seeing that creation rests on pure beauty and goodness for themselves; or by one who is unloving and turned all to himself, seeing that creation is effluent from love and is the turning of God unto all creatures and the coming forth of creatures for him who could not be alone?

An old writer says that we may have an ear for music "without being able to perform in any kind, we may judge well of poetry, without being poets" to write it; but we can have no notion of goodness without being good.

DOING AND KNOWING

IV.

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching."—John vii, 17.

The great general truth is that a good life quickens the understanding; a noble morality enlarges the intelligence.

This is a divine truth. It is a sight of the being of God, the eternal Holiness.

I have spoken of this truth in three foregoing sermons:

First, I tried to set forth the need of moral life to mental life, in that moral faithfulness is a strenuous exercise, whereas impulse or emotion is easy; and religious experience if unguarded by moral action falls therefore to indulgence or weakness.

Secondly, I sought to show the dependence of mental impulses or emotions on moral action by the law that active exercise of will intrenches itself in habit and gathers power to itself, whereas passive affections tend to fade and will grow weak by repetition, unless reinforced by moral earnestness, which is action.

Thirdly, I endeavored to express the great truth, the searching truth, that without a noble morality there can be no true knowledge or wisdom, because things can be known by us as truly they are only in measure as we are akin to them and like them; and all things come of God, the Eternal Holiness, and can be known by us as truly they are, only in measure as we are like to the goodness from which they spring, which is in them.

It is not to be overlooked how the good and great, the spiritual, the prophetic, agree in this truth, that, as the race is not to the swift, so true knowledge is not to the bright, the witty, the keen, the mighty in speech. Isaiah proclaimed the word of

the Lord, the command to repent and to live nobly, the while he looked forward to a great dispensation of the favor of the Lord, a mighty prince, a Messiah, who should redeem all and set the kingdom of Irsael on everlasting pillars. Jesus likewise called to sincere and spiritual life, to high motives and noble behavior therewith; but he taught (at least, so I read through the mazes of conflicting expressions in the gospels on this point) that no temporal king, no crowned or war-like Messiah, was to be looked for, but only a Messianic Spirituality, or if a person, only a spiritual prophet and teacher; and that not in the future is the spirit of the Lord to be sought, and never to be waited for as if to come by and by, but that always "NOW is the accepted time." Socrates likewise dwelt on morality in daily life, but he taught as a philosopher, sifted things with his logic and laid stress on the value of clear ideas. But all of these three so different in speech and method, have one point in common, that, namely, they ascribe their greatest and best knowledge, not first or most to arduous thinking, but to some inward or moral condition of them which opened the mind to divine light. We shall not do well to put aside such an agreeing mind among the great, the good, the prophetic, and think it an error in itself and the agreement a mere hap. We shall be wise if we think it a spiritual truth, to which a high and noble life has led these seers. We ought to conceive that in this agreement of noble souls, saying that their knowledge and insight is given them directly in a manner, through their spiritual natures,—in this, I say, we ought to conceive that we are beholding the truth of the power of reason, that it is a moral and spiritual power. Insight of mind is moral divination. True and high knowledge, which is the seeing of things as truly they are in the divine order, grows from a high, glorious, pure life of the soul, and from a noble behavior.

The Master says, "He that wills to do the will of God, shall know." That we may take one more step into the center of these living words, I will ask the question, "What is life? And differs it in any way from Existence? And in what way?

Now, this may be indeed a question of the most deep philosophy. No question can be asked which will take us at one flight into rarer realms of reasoning, of observing, conceiving, than this question, "What is Life?" But it is not in such a way that I

ask it now. I go not with it to abstract realms, to speculative thoughts. I take the question simply and practically. I will go with it to the simple facts of common experience and daily observation. By these I will seek to picture Life; not to define it by its source or arising or its nature in itself, but only to show it by the appearance and quality it wears to our senses continually.

Now, to our common sight, no ideas are to be distinguished more carefully than these two, Life and Existence.

This is the first and most plain lesson of that act or event in life which we call Death. The dead body exists as much as when it was a living body. Sure it is that a great change has occurred. But whatever that change be, it has not affected the *existence* of the body. What we name Life has fled; if we know not how or why or whither it has gone, or whence it came or how subsisted, it is plain that a power, a motion, a feeling, a response, which we call Life, has gone. Yet there lies the body; it can not stand nor posture nor balance nor move nor flush any more; but there lies it, an *existing* thing as much as in life's jocund day-spring; and by the embalming art of man it may be stationed in its existence and shape for a hundred generations.

But now follow the natural course of things and observe further. If man interfere not, with his spices and unguents, but the body be left to itself, soon there is a change. Its elements begin to part from one another, at first slowly but soon rapidly. It is picked to pieces by many fingers, by which I mean the forces and affinities of the substances in it and around it. We can not tell what the mystery of this action is, any more than we can tell what life is; but it is plain to our senses. The myriad hands of inorganic nature, as we call it, the chemical fingers of matter, destroy the body, rend apart its elements, dissolve it, give it to the winds, pour it into the sea, shed it in rain and dew, and build up plants out of it in the soil.

Now, though we can see but little way into the mystery of these acts, one thing is plain, that, namely, these mordant and dissolving agencies of the mineral kingdom are as active around the body in its living state as after it has died. Why then tear they not the living body to pieces, as they do the dead? That is the very question of Life. If we could answer that, we could tell what Life is. All we can say is that by the living body these

attacking agencies are resisted, but with the dead body they have their own way unhindered. Life appears, then, as resistance to forces that attack it, as power against these powers. This is the appearance and quality of life to our senses, that life is a mysterious capacity of resistance to the equally mysterious power of encompassing agencies which attack life.

Now, here comes to light again a truth and law which before I have spoken of. This namely, that life, so long as it glows, and puts forth, and persists with strength, is exercised and trained by the consuming and eroding agencies swarming around it; so that it persists with more strength, and burns grandly by virtue of the hostile conditions or resistances which it has overcome. I have said before that life with no resistance to it, with naught to do to maintain itself, is an impossible thought.* Life must gather its substance, its food. That action is energy and exercise. And it must void what is useless or poisonous. That action also is energy and effort. By the strength of the effort and exercise, life grows the more strong. This happens and continues unto the rounding down of the mysterious cycle which life runs. We know not by what subtle effects, influences, relations, life is cyclical; but so it is. It runs its round course like a fire up to fulness and flame, down again to a waning glow and ashes; all the way beautiful,—which proves every stage natural. When the vital cycle is fulfilled, the ravaging and dissolving agencies prevail. These have no cycle. They lay one steady strain on life, never weakening, never for an instant lifted away. At last they overcome life, when it has ascended and descended in its rhythmical orbit, and its cycle is finished. But softly, with wondrous gentleness and a silver beauty and a sculptured expressiveness, the attacking agencies prevail. The result is the loveliness of age and the quiet peace of its transition.

Such is the appearance and quality of life as it meets the senses and shows itself in the physical frame. Let us come now to the domain of mind. Strange were it if in mental life there were no analogy to bodily life; very strange, if life appeared not in the mind after the very same manner and laws as in the body. And so it is. As in our physical being we have life joined with mere existence, which is to say, the vital power and the body in

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which that mystery sojourns, so in the mental being we have our living part and our merely existing part. These I have named heretofore our activity and passivity. Our mere existence, or passivity, is in our desires, emotions, impulses; for in these we have no part but sensation of them. We are acted on; like the body, which is acted on by all the encroaching and affecting agencies around it. Our life, or activity, is in the moral nature, in the will. In this we act, decide, determine, put forth, strive. In this we act on the emotions, to choose some, to repel others, as life assimilates some elements to the body's use, and voids or repels others. We can observe no cycle in the life of the mind, like to that in the bodily life; nor even can we guess what may replace it in the immensity of the mind's life. What wonders and knowledge we shall have in the sublime hereafter, we can not conceive, nor what means and laws of life may fill us with astonishment and, be sure, with joy. But here we can discern no cycle of the mental life like to the bodily. Only we can see plainly that we have life, like to the vitality of the body; and that this life is the will, the moral energy; also that we have a mere existence like to the body itself; and that this is the passive sphere in us, of emotions and desires. This I call our merely existing part because in it we are acted on, and have no function but to receive impressions.

Now, the life within us, which is the moral part, the Will and its energy, is exercised and trained and led forth unto strength by the resistance which the moral nature meets; like as the bodily life is exercised and grows strong by meeting the many agencies that attack it. This I have said before in these sermons on Doing and Knowing, namely, that a moral life which has naught to do to maintain itself, is an impossible thought.* We are encompassed with resistance, in all manner of temptations, seductions, difficulties, which tax the power of the life of the Will; and when the will prevails, it is led forth to more power by the exercising of it, by the strength of the enticement or difficulty which is overcome. But the passive part, emotions, feelings, passions, tend to decrease and weaken by repetition. They tend to become less intense the more often they are felt. This I have tried to set forth at length before in these sermons on Doing and Knowing.

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Come now to a closer look at our moral nature. How works this law of activity and passivity, of our living part and our part which is mere existence, of the will which is life and the emotions which are but impressions on us—how works this? Deeply it works, effecting and determining in each instance more life in us or more death, more action or more of being acted on. Every moral effort is a life and death effort. At the issue of it, we are more alive by the moral energy of the will, or more dead and sunk more in our mere existence, blown about here and there like sand by every waft of feeling which penetrates to us from the outward. If life, which is the will, sustain itself and conquer in any struggle, then life has become so much the stronger. With every repetition of that successful power, life enforces itself and is deepend into habit. The act which at first, and many times perhaps, cost effort, effort barely triumphant mayhap, has enlarged the power of life so much by its reiteration, that now it is done with that ease and swift autonomy which is habit. The law of the tending of all activities to habit is the increase of life through the resistance overcome; for the strength of the resistance passes into the life or moral energy which overcomes it. By this we come more and more to act from a store of central life, a mighty quality of life, so that consciousness of effort flees, and we seem but to breathe deeply, as it were, and to walk with a blissful power and life.

But if in any conflict life sustain not itself, if the will be overcome, then the evil act, as well as the good, tends to become a habit, while the passive emotions which prevailed will grow weaker with every repetition. Thus life dwindles so much that the will yields more readily with each instance while the enticement becomes less; until at last it is overthrown, washed in death. The evil act then is performed as the sand drifts, and we have sunk from life to a mere existence; an easy prey meanwhile to every new impulse, as the sand is drifted by every gust of wind. I mean not that the moral and spiritual spark ever can be extinguished utterly and the soul die past ever arising into any life again. No. Far be that from our faith, and from our thoughts of the redeeming laws and discipline and patience of God. But deep is the law of the tendency and working of evil, the law of activity and passivity, of vital power and mere existence, of life and death, in human nature.

Now we may answer again the question with which we set forth. That question is of the relations between the moral nature and the knowing powers, whereby knowledge comes of right doing, or, as Jesus phrased it, "He that wills to do the will of God shall know of the teaching." We may answer the question by means of the law of life in us. Some specific reasons come to mind why the good man should be the understanding man; such as, the trained power of industry which lies in an exercised and living will, and the faculty of fixed and continued attention confirmed by this same power of will. But underlying all such reasons or visible capacities of life, is the one cause, the fact of life itself. The good man is *alive*. This is the reason why he has faculty to know. If in the body the blood be pure, the nerves sound, life abundant, the life thrills not only in vital centers but in every fiber, runs in the feet, grasps in the hand, inhales deeply of the air, sets tensely every muscle, flushes in the cheek, sparkles in the eye. So in the soul; to be alive is to rejoice and put forth in all faculties. Let there be life in the center thereof, which is the moral being, and life plays in the fancy, constructs in the imagination, wings aspiration, empowers love, prays in religion, thinks in the understanding, knows in the reason. To be alive, this it is which in its action is power and knowledge in its holy and unfathomable source in Infinite Life is inspiration. The moral life within us, the energy of the will, and therewith the growth of the love of good, that spiritual spark from God which for evermore strives to flame forth, and never can be extinguished utterly, we do believe,—that life is the mystery of us, wherein we live move and have our being in God. To be more alive is to be more inspired of God in that measure, and given to know the good, the beautiful and the true. To be so deeply alive, so full of moral energy by faithfulness, that the whole soul looks forth unto the one object of knowledge, who is "The One in the many," the Infinite, the Eternal,—this is to be prophet and Christ. But more life or less, the mystery is the same. That *we live*, is the inspiration of God. Thereupon God gives the increase of life, as all else, according to laws which appear as if executing themselves. They are the ways of God.

The effect of this law of life in masses of men is one of the Providential ways whereby truth and virtue put on strength, but evil is clad in weakness and destruction. Good is continually active and life-making; evil is essentially passive and death-bringing. Great multitudes, like nations or races, who fall to evil ways and practice them, are prevented from perpetuating the evil. They are prevented by *loss of life*. Think what would follow in the world if great injustices, avarice, luxury, slavery, wantonness, were able to draw power to themselves and increase in strength, or even to stand steadfast in their strongholds. Then rioting, luxury, violence and robbery never would fail, because they would use any means, scrupling not at any measures of force or fraud. But they cannot, because they cease to be alive. This is visible majestically throughout history, told over and over in the fall of decaying communities or empires, when luxury, wantonness and greed have displaced early fortitude, simplicity and virtue. There may be greater wealth, vaster material resources, countless numbers. 'Tis no matter. Life has waned. Courage in the camp and wisdom in the council go with it, and the people fall. Neither is the race to the swift nor the battle to the strong. Power is a moral fact. The name of that fact is Life; and the name of Life is God.

Thus then, in widest and holy terms, with mystery and glory and worship, we may answer the question with which we set forth, the question of the relation of moral being to the knowing faculty, contained in the deep words of the Master. This is the answer, that moral being is to the knowing faculty as a fountain of life to one stream thereof; that if we will to do the will of God we shall know of the teaching, because then we shall be filled with life—which is to breathe of the infinity of God.

TIME IN RELIGION.

I.

My subject is Religion in some of its relations to Time. Time is like a river, all one. But it is mapped and named by the provinces through which it passes. The provinces of the river of Time are the Past, the Present, the Future. I shall speak of some relations of Religion to each of these in turn. In this discourse I speak of the Past.

I hope to go with you to a hill from which we may have some prospect of the nature of religion. But let me lead thither from a point afar off; and I will trust that the road to the hill will have given us some knowledge and experience whereby the better to understand the prospect from the top when we shall have climbed to it.

I begin the journey, then, by imagining a crowded multitude of people. Conceive of a vast throng of men swaying in waves, pouring around you like waters, and surging in one direction like a stream. Add to your picture the circumstances, the attire, the vehicles, the voices and clamors, the calls, sometimes the dead silences. I have stood

> Where throngs of men were sweeping by me, busy
> Returning from more business; and women too,
> Yea, even girls and boys, all tired, all glad
> To be let out into the air from labor.
> Voices released, rang loud on every side;
> On pavements the crowds rattled, and thronging beasts
> Jostled each other to the driver's call
> And crack of whip,—sometimes a wrathful scream,—
> Though soon engulfed in the great roar that rose,
> Like wind and wave commingled on the coast,
> Around me. And the sharp, shrill tread of feet
> On pavement, multitudinous, came up
> To top the roar, shot with sheen gleams of voices.
> I heard a distant bell, clanging before,
> Now rolling with the rest, so that all seemed
> An instant as if all were bells, different,
> But ringing with one thought in many parts.

It was grand, this symphony,
Of hurrying men and rustling dress of women,
The boy's halloo, the laugh of girls (what weddings!),
And prattle of toddling babes, led by their hands,
The rattling wagons, teamster's shout, dogs barking,
The clangor of great doors opening and shutting,
All mingled in one vast reverberation
Which to my sense was wondrous harmony.

With such a picture in your mind, and multitudes thronging around you, reflect on the vastness of the whole, the insignificance of any one.

That is not a depressing reflection. There is a "blessedness of being little." 'Tis sad to plug up with ourselves a port of the Universe. 'Tis inspiriting and full of power so to yield us to the pathetic sight of a vast concourse of people as not even to bethink us how little we are, but to be clothed with the majesty of the vast assembling of men and things. I like often to be lost in a company, in an extensive multitude. I delight then to feel merged and dissolved in humanity. 'Tis a soothing, a baptising, a supporting of me, like being out of sight in the washing of a sea which floats me.

The "blessedness of being little," of feeling ourselves included and involved with many things, from which apart we are naught, but with them partake of vastness,—this lacks not pleasant fables to preach it. For example: An eagle swooping up and down at a great height, cried to a linnet who was perched on a rose-tree, "Poor thing, thou insignificance, thou feeble-plume, thou knowest not the upper air, nor the crag whither no other creature can come, either by flying or by climbing!" "Peace be with you," said the linnet; "for my part I rather would sing on a rose-tree than scream on a crag. And you have no company. I am contained in a great flock. I rather would be a small portion of a great thing than the whole of a smaller thing."

When we are in a vast throng, we feel the power of the people. In them is the hope, the light, the sight, of humanity.

"When the state-house is the hearth,
When the church is private worth,
Then the perfect state is come,
The republican at home."

Here and there arise voices; but the people is the great voice. Here and there shoot stars of singers; but the people is

the great song. Great captains start up here and there; but the people rule the rulers, and keep the keepers. The men of the highways and byways, they do the acting and the thinking, the loving, the teaching and the praying, in the house, at the fire-side, in the shop, the school, the church. In a crowded assembly we are made to know that it is not the few but the many whom we must acknowledge and reverence; as from a vantage-point where a city is seen, it is not the spires but the houses that make the city.

Will you have another fable, for this truth? From the bowels of the earth some shining jet was taken and a fire builded of it. Said the blue flames that fluttered and rustled over the surface, "Who is appareled like to us? what beauty is like our beauty?" "Be still," said the fire, "you are only the tongues to this burning heart beneath you."

Yet, now, take another view. Behold a great concourse swayed by the power of one man. He melts destinies in his will, he moulds cities in his heart, he shapes states in his judgment, he leads armies with his cunning, he breaks the hearts of senates with his speech. He may be in command and his word issue like law, as Alfred of England was. Or he may be seated in persuasion, and lead by a fiery breath, like Peter the Hermit. But however it be, from throne or desk, in armor or gown, we behold the supremacy and power of one man over many. The vast throng is silent, the vast throng bows; rises the individual, and they obey, and obeying, they adore.

But now, I pray you, look more closely at this power of the individual. Is it not the power of utterance, of putting forth into effect, of bringing to a terse or supple shape a popular faith or form—is it not this which is the power of the one man? The few who lead must speak and serve the thoughts which are seething unspoken in the people. They may chasten, instruct, qualify, inform these thoughts; but they can move no jot, nor effect anything, till the thoughts be present and already burning with a lively fire in the people's heart. Alfred of England—a name to stir the blood—did mighty things and was a very great and good man. Yet he would have been but as a leaf in the wind if he had not been the voice and hand of England's will to drive out the Dane and keep the land for Saxon homes.

So was Peter the Hermit but a flame from the fiery heart of Christendom. This man was a mis-shapen dwarf, who found his way in military service to Palestine and the Holy City, and came back roaring with the flame kindled in him by the suffering of Christian prisoners whom he had seen in the hands of Moslems, and by the power of unbelievers, in the City of Christ. His puny and ungainly body was shrunken still more and emaciated by his ascetic discipline. He was very contemptible as an object. Yet he aroused the north of Europe as by a whirlwind. All Christendom sprang to the Crusades and waged the wars for a hundred years. It was not Peter the Hermit, but Peter the Voice of the Faith, Peter the Utterance of the Common Heart, who did that work. Without that fiery flood on which he stood, he might have been like a fuming hill spouting some tongues of smoke, but not the volcano which he was, pouring floods of fire. His screams would have been as contemptible as his body. So it is, in like manner, in Antony's oration. The shrewd man attempted no argument, as Brutus did, but translated the people to themselves,—

> "I am no orator as Brutus is;
> But as you know me all, a plain, blunt man.
>
> * * *
>
> I only speak right on:
> I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
> Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor dumb mouths,
> And bid them speak for me."

In such instances, when some voice utters the fervors of the people's heart, men accept it as they take the grandeurs of nature, by kindred spirit. The poet, the leader, is then like to the great forces and splendors of nature, which appeal to us because we are like them. Well has it been said: "We must all have felt, when certain effects in nature, combinations of form and color, have been presented to us, our own idea speaking in intelligent and yet celestial language; when, for instance, the long bars of purple, 'edged with intolerable radiance,' seemed to float in a sea of pale, pure green, when the whole sky seemed to reel with thunder, when the night-wind moaned. It is wonderful how the most common-place men and women, beings who, as you would have thought, had no conception that rose beyond a commercial speculation, or a fashionable entertainment,

are elevated by such scenes; how the slumbering grandeur of their nature wakes and acknowledges kindred with the sky and storm. 'I cannot speak,' they would say, 'the feelings which are in me; I have had emotions, aspirations, thoughts; I cannot put them into words. Look there! listen now to the storm! That is what I meant, only I never could say it out till now.'"

So cry the people to the poet, prophet, bard, to the true king,—"You speak us: you are the voice of us; we know your words, because they were in our hearts before; go onward; we follow; we are yours because you are ours."

Here let me state in brief just what so far I have said. I have stated—

That when we are encompassed with a multitude, we feel the vastness of the whole and the insignificance of the individual;

That the people do the real acting and thinking and feeling of the world, in home and mart and school;

That nevertheless we often behold great multitudes apparently swayed and moved by one man, or by a few;

That this shows the power and supremacy of the individual, who before seemed so insignificant in the midst of the throng;

That, however, when we look closely at this individual power, it seems in the main to consist in the faculty of utterance;

That the one man, or the few, lead and move the world, because they express what is surging in the common heart.

Now, as time goes on and the present is swallowed into the far past, it is the utterance, the expression, that remains visible and conspicuous. All the vast multitude, the countless many, fade from sense, from memory, from record. It must be so. In history no names, no deeds, no stories, remain of the great body of the people. The multitude makes only one broad and even mark on the page, in which no individual influences appear. But those who have uttered the voice of the many, who have expressed the common heart in song, prophecy, command, they remain visible, and tower above. And the further we get away from any epoch, the less we discern the throngs of men in it, and the more we behold standing forth the eminent few who gave utterance to the songs and flames, the woes and joys and needs, of the people's hearts.

Hence it is very sure that the past will become resolved into instances and figures of solitary grandeur. At its time, every epoch was a vast, stirring, fecund popular life, mighty and affecting, with here and there some towering person held up by the people because he was able to be the utterer of the people's soul. But at a far distance, all this great stir of life settles and levels and is out of sight, and only the towering persons remain visible.

Conceive a pleasant country of fields and villages, in which arises a lofty and craggy mountain. The pretty towns and fields slope to the sea shore, nodding to the ocean with billows of grain and red-roofed homes of love. Over them hang the mountain crags, where eagles perch and lightnings play with thunders. Below, all is plenty and power, growth and peace, beauty and simplicity, seed time and harvest, birth and life, and death, wondrous abundance. Above, all is awe and solitude, caverns and glooms, and the house of storms. You will look up to the mountain and adore; you will look on the smiling valleys and adore too, and there you will choose to dwell. Now sail away over the sea. Soon the low shore will sink. Gone are all the full houses of the people, the fields of their food, the meadows of their cattle, the bells of their churches, their stores and halls, and the green places where they sport. But the mountain rears its lofty height and looms on the vessel, till at last, after long standing alone, it blends with the parallel grandeur of the sky. So loom and stay aloft the bards and leaders who are lifted up among mankind, when the throngs of the people and their dwellings sink below our vision on the coasts of the Past.

Now, as the people get further and further away from the few lofty persons, the towering men, who remain high in view, when at last the people have gone far enough away, and look back on the grand persons from a far distance, a strange and beautiful thing comes to pass. The people begin to clothe the grand characters who remain towering into sight in that far past, with wonder-stories. This the people do under the influence of their religion, which is a force very mighty in human history and life. When the people look back and gaze on those great figures, immense and mysterious in the silver mists of the distant time, they say to one another that such mighty persons were

gods, or messengers of God. Soon the things told of them grow, and are clothed with mystery. Other stories break forth like flowers and springs, all marvelous and full of sacred signs and deeds and divine powers. Soon the great figures are covered and mantled with these marvels, these simple wonderful stories, as if they were in a corona of light, whence rays shoot forth and sparkles are showered on every hand. These stories are the miracles with which all early histories and all religious records and scriptures shine. They are the simple outbreak of the people's religious feeling, when they look back to the grand shapes, the mighty persons, looming up in their far past. These, with wonder and awe, the people cover with their religious feeling, and behold them in the light of a divine presence which they ascribe to them. To that reverent backward gaze, all appears vivid, wonder-working, sacred, mysterious, divine.

In the northern hills of our country there is a mountain ledge overhanging a quiet, small lake lying like a mirror below. The ledge is a mass of bare rocks, jutting one from another, boldly defined against the sky. If you stand close to these crags, they form no figure, agree in no shape. They are but as other rocky juttings, piled one on another and overhanging. But go away from them, and they begin to melt one into another strangely, and to agree in a mysterious combination. At last from a right distance look up at them, and they have become a countenance. A "great stone face," a mighty face, with grand forehead, a powerful nose and firm chin, a vast and perfect profile, forms the top of the mountain cliff, looking over the lake and the valley. No one can look on "the great stone face" unmoved. Its stern majesty, its moral power, is tremendous. Often have I gazed up at it with a reversion to the old wild ages seizing on me, a trembling, a fear, an impulse to fall prostrate and worship. This illustrates what happens among a religious people when they look at the events and persons of their history. When they are near, the leaders, the bards, the great deeds are only common blocks, things familiar, piled together as happened in the transactions of the time. But when the people have traveled far away and looked back, all is changed. Lo, a face! All then seems full of meaning, and everything has purpose; all is personal; the great events and characters draw

together and agree in a divine presence, in a countenance which looks forth and over all—the countenance of God! Thus arises the element of marvel, myths, miracles in religion among early races; and once arisen, it lasts long and holds mightily to the imagination, the awe and fear, the affections of men. So that even yet the old and lovely miracle-stories are taken as veritable facts by almost all the world. But in truth they are the religious dreams and reverence with which the people looked back to the far past, where their great characters had become mysterious and heavenly by the transmuting effect of the distance, which left them looming alone in the divine horizon.

Here, then, we come intelligently on the tendency of religion, during so long ages, to cling to the past and to found on it. This springs from two great causes.

First, religion must rest on individual impulses and inspirations. It springs from the teachers. It arises from bards who sing of creation; from prophets who utter the everlasting verities, and call to the people to come to the hill of the Lord. Then at last the whole past seems to be only these great figures. All else has sunk and vanished. They remain. They loom grandly, ominously. Religion clings about them.

Again, religion rests by nature on the sense of the divine immanence. Religion can have no other source or life. If the power of God be not here and now, there is no religion. Therefore religion must rest in divinity immanent and living with us. By this nature of it, religion first forms the miracles and signs which shine around the far great bards and leaders, and then rejoices in the miracles, and clings about them, as being and showing the very present power and overshadowing of God.

Here come we intelligently, as I have said, to the historical fact that religion always hitherto has clung about the past and turned to it for the proofs, the power and the glory of faith. Here see we plainly the fact, and the nature and reason of it, that the great religions, like Christianity, Islam, Judaism, the Parsee Faith, have founded themselves on an epoch in the far past, on historical events and great persons, to which these religions have looked back with awe and love for their origin, their proofs, their claims, their wonders.

The mental condition which has produced the fine stories

of wonders and signs in all religions, is very childlike, very simple and lovely. It is the spiritual posture of trust, dependence, uplooking,—faith in its most simple and acceptable form. With perfect simplicty and good faith the miraculous stories broke forth, because the people were full of the child's feeling that all things are living and have a sense, a power. Immediate life, divinity, mystery, might, pressed on them. They beheld and felt the deity on every hand.

Well is it for us if with adult knowledge we have kept the childlike soul. If while we reason about the fire and gather the chemistry of it, we feel also the warmth of it, it is well with us. If with our collections of knowledge, our arrays of explanations, our maps of heaven and earth, we lose not the sense of mystery and of the holy deeps of nature, it is well with us. Nay, if our study, our research, our balances, beakers, alembics and scalpels, lead us to a deeper and holier awe, a mystery more vast and beautiful, as surely these implements should do, it is well with us. If, however we divide, analyze and handle what nature has crystallized, we feel bathed in life and can see naught but life around us, and hear only life, immediate life, wondrous and holy presence, awful and beautiful presence, severe and loving presence, it is well with us. If we go our way cheerfully like children, glad in a simple feeling of the wonders and beauties of earth and of men, taking them vividly and like sweet gifts, singing songs and saying prayers, it is well with us. It is then very well with us. Peace, joy, strength, exuberance, reverence, greatness, are with us. Before the child can come to full manhood, the man must come again to his childhood, or happily never have lost it. Then "mind and soul, according well, make music as before,—but vaster."

RELIGION AND TIME.

II.

In my first sermon on Religion and Time, I sought to show how it is that Religion always has a fond backward look and for a very long time holds to the past and plants itself in the wonders and the great persons of some far and shining epoch. In this discourse I have to treat of Religion as related to the future; and this relation, I think, we shall see to grow naturally from the look of love and reverence with which Religion first turns itself toward the far and sacred past.

Religion looks backward to a "golden age." At that blessed time—so it seems to the eye of early Religion—God walked with men and led them by the hand. A light of mysterious and holy presence, a mystical power, a wonder and glory, brooded over the people. The sun and stars, the wind and waters, were full of signs, and were obedient to God's command to work wonders for his people. All nature was placable and pleasant and peaceful; or if arising in wrath, it was for some sin of the people, soon shrived and forgiven. The people were valient, confident, glorious, great in achievements; their Kings were magnificent, their deeds mighty, their renown splendid. All this has gone. Nature has lost that vast glow. Men have departed from the ancient excellence. They have not the strength of old; the majesty has fled which lighted the antique time, for "there were giants in those days."

Such seems "the golden age" of men and nature when Religion looks backward to its beginning, to its first recollections.

But now, if Religion thus looks backward for its age of gold, it follows that Religion will look forward for a like precious

era. If it have descended from one such sacred and happy time in the past, which is no more, it will look forward to another in the future which is to arise. If the present time seem but a flat common to which we have come down from eastern mountains that are gilded in the heavens, Religion inevitably will look forward to new hills and heights in the future which again shall pierce the sky. For the human heart never is hopeless. Never it loses its belief, its assurance of good, its triumph; never it thinks, nor can believe, that divinity is spent and good times ended. If they be not here now, they but linger waiting. The present is but the suspension of them, as rain suspended is a dark cloud, but descending brings drops splendid with the etherial fires. The human spirit clings to hope, to faith in a good and golden time; to belief that all things good and great, whatsoever not now are visible but once have been visible, are but stored up and again will be opened; to confidence in love, in peace, in human greatness and destiny, in the fate of the creatures of God and in divine Perfectness;—to these the human soul clings like a tree around its heart, mighty against all tempests while that heart is sound. What glory has been at any time, says the heart of man, and is not now, surely will be again.

Therefore it happens that every religion which has looked backward to a great past for its glories and sanctions, has looked forward to a new "golden age" or heaven.

But consider again. If Religion have a special holy time in the past, a sacred dispensation, an authority to which heart and mind must bow, this must be a conception of God as a monarch, throned somewhere, a legislator or maker of statutes and a governor or king who enforces those decrees. The Most High is conceived then as a potentate, a Lord Paramount, a sovereign, of vast power, who descends from his courts at times to correct things on the earth and make known himself, his messengers or his decrees by miracles, mighty marvels, the like of which only an unlimited will and the power of an Almighty word could do. For these things are not in the present. No one looks to see the sun stand still, mountains flame and thunderous voices break from them, seas divide into watery walls, cities fall at a trumpet-blast, angels trooping and singing in the sky, prophets caught up to heaven in fiery chariots, and a vast multi-

tude of men fed to satisfaction with a handful of bread and fish —no one looks for such things now. In the present, all is order and an even march of things. One day dawns, ascends, descends, and goes its way, like another. The power of God is beheld in the order, not in a temporary overthrowing of the order. Now, if Religion look backward for glories and sanctions and greatness, it must be for splendors and greatness after a kind and manner not beheld in the present; else the present would satisfy, and there would be no straining of the vision into the past, but the present would be full of awe. Therefore, Religion, as I have said, in its reverent and intense backward gaze, into a mysterious past, must conceive of that past as very different from the quiet harmony of the present and that immanence of divine life which now is the unspeakable stillness under the day and the night. Religion must conceive then of God as the monarch and legislator and worker of great signs and marvels, "high on a throne of royal state." And so Religion *has* conceived, as I have said in the former discourse, of Religion as related to the Past.

Now, if Religion thus conceived of a monarch-deity and legislator-deity in the past, it was inevitable that Religion then should conceive of a rewarding deity in the future, who should give the recompense of obedience and adjust all things righteously. For always now, in the present, all things are incomplete. There is no equalization. Behold, on every hand the wicked flourishing, the good abused, even unto death; "right on the scaffold, wrong on the throne;" idle luxury riding in purple and ermine, frugal labor plodding the path of privations; anger, pride and oppression triumphant, meekness, generosity and patience overcome. Therefore, the rewards and punishments being so unequal in the present time, the religion which looks backward to a special dispensation, to a proclamation of divine commands with wonders and signs, to a monarch-deity on a far and high-heavenly throne, giving statutes, surely must look to the future, to a heaven of recompense, for the rewards and indemnities of the divine command. And so *has* Religion done, in every instance. Whenever Religion has founded on a miraculous past, equally it has rested faith and hope in a heaven of the future.

A story of a robber, and of a merchant whom he fell on by the roadside, will illustrate this fact in Religion. The merchant sought to reason with the highwayman to prevail with him to be let go, by setting forth the dangers of robbing on the king's roads. "Heavy punishments have been decreed for this violence," said the merchant, "for this lawlessness, this robbing on the highway. The king decrees that for such offense you shall be cast into prison and be made to labor in chains, with a cell of iron for your chamber and a wooden settle for your bed, and that you shall be branded on the cheek that all men may know you are a robber." "And where may this king live who commands so?" said the bandit. "In the great city a thousand miles eastward," said the merchant. "Then belike his prisons and chains are a thousand miles west of me," said the brigand; "I see none hereabouts. What have his commands to do here?" "Nay," said the merchant, "but there is more than the king's own power. For he has proclaimed these decrees and punishments because he has received them from a magnificent and mighty king who went before him, who declared that robbery should be a base crime forever and should be punished so; and also he caused to be ordained not only these chastisements for the crime but also great rewards, a pension, decorations, stars on the breast and gold chains around the neck, for all such as attain to sixty years of life with no fraudulent deed." "And when," said the robber, "lived this king who caused to be cried abroad these great things?" "A thousand years ago, in a holy and mighty time," answered the merchant. "Ha!" said the robber, "We may wait a thousand years yet for his fine promises. He will be as long again as he has been, I trow. Come, unpack you! Deliver!"

But consider again of this principle, namely, that whatever religion looks to the past for its authority will look surely to a future for rewards and glories. With this notion of a special source, authority, sanction and presence of the power of God at a past epoch, goes the conception of a chosen people. Thus the Jews believed themselves elected above all nations by the favor of God. They were the peculiar and chosen people, Israel beloved of the Lord, to be set on high above all others, and glorified by a covenant which the Most High had made with them.

Likewise the Moslems so think of themselves, as of the cherished and favored race, endowed with the last fruits of prophecy, and builded for a temple of the one true faith. Not less have Christians claimed, who have considered all others to be pagans and heathen, unbelievers, sceptics, impious people, scoffers, doomed worthily to be outcasts forever in perdition and fire.

Now this must be so. I say it *must* be that if any religion build itself on a past time of miracles and divine glories no longer companionable with men, the people of that religion will think of themselves as a chosen race. For if we alone of all earth's peoples, we alone, have the true religion, and it were given forth for us by a special grace and with heavenly wonders and signs of fire and cloud at a past time, then we are the chosen ones of the Lord by that special grace, marvel and favor of his power.

Our great and holy prophet, the Master, the lowly Nazarene, shows in his life how swiftly the thought of being chosen and set above others by God, will vanish when religion is referred no more to the past, nor builded on special wonders therein. Jesus was a Jew, born into all the fervors, prides, hopes, memories and worship of his people. All religion was builded, like a city of spires, within a wall, which was Moses. Thirteen hundred years before had lived Moses; around him had gathered the flames and thunders of Sinai, the plagues of Egypt, the division of the sea, the manna in the desert, and a thousand mighty wonders and favors of Yahweh. On this special presence of the Almighty religion had been builded; and they who had the heritage thereof were the chosen people. But Jesus grew alone,—so I read the record,—for thirty years, thirty years of opening spiritual life, growing into a deep and peaceful brooding on the monitions in his own soul. Then he began to teach, saying that religion was not founded on Moses, but in the soul; and "Why judge ye not even of yourselves what is right?" and he "spoke with authority," out of his own soul, and hesitated not to go clean contrary to the principles of Moses, as about the Sabbath day, the washing of hands, and many precepts and usages. Now when thus he had done away with the building of religion on the past and had laid its foundations in the soul, at once all the prides of race and all claims to being a chosen and coven-

anted people fled away from before his face; fled afar off, and made room for those beautiful teachings and parables, the good Samaritan, the lowly Publican at prayer, the poor penitent, the outcast, the shamed and despised, the spiritual kingdom, the faithful to do the will of God, and the same his brother and his sister, and many such teachings, which knitted up the rent body and made humanity whole once more.

But now, if with the founding of religion in the past and on special wonders and signs, must arise the claim of being a chosen people, so with this claim must arise a forecasting, a dream, a forward look, a launching into the future. For to the chosen people always are given promises and predictions, future sanctions and rewards; for never is the chosen people as glorious as its dreams, nor as it believes the elect of the Lord must be, and often indeed it is abused and cast down in misfortunes, defeats, oppressions, servitude. Therefore always there are promises and golden pictures of the future. Thus again we come on the truth that a religion looking back for its sactions and divine counsels, will look forward for its rewards and divine redemption. So was it with the Jews, who, having a golden age of religion in Moses and the prophets, looked forward to a future splendor in the Messiah and his kingdom. So is it with the Christian, who, having a golden age in Jesus and the Apostles, looks onward to a heaven of golden streets and precious pleasures.

But now, consider again this principle. All that pertains to Religion must be either outward or inward. I mean it must be either an externality, a formality, or else a spirituality and inward power. Either it must be seated in the soul and have its authority and throne there, and then its value, rewards and fruits will be sought in the soul; or else it must be founded on some outward authority at some time and place, and then it will be like to appeal to outward results, rewards and fruits. If the source of Religion be an external source, or it appeal to something *given to* man and added *to* him rather than springing up *in* him by his spiritual nature, then the aim, virtue and fruits of the religion will not seem to be in the soul, in spiritual growth, beauty and peace, but in some good things or advantage to be received from the outward source or power which is the authority and origin of the religion. In brief, if we look outward for

the authority of Religion, we shall be like equally to look outward for its virtue and rewards.

A story illustrates this, not unhappily, I think. In a little fishing village on the coast of a great kingdom, a fisherman one day had the luck to catch a very fine turbot. So large and handsome a fish of that valuable kind was very rare. It weighed fifty good pounds. The like of it had not been seen within the memory of the oldest fisherman. The worthy man and his good wife surveyed their prize with delight and walked round and round it rapturously; but never once they thought to use it for themselves, nor to sell it. Such a fish must have no less a destiny than the king's table. Soon, therefore, clad in his best, the fisherman was at the palace gates, and being admitted, layed the great turbot before the king and besought, with many long humble phrases, his Majesty to accept it. "Willingly, my good man," said the king, "and what reward shall I give you for it?" Now if the honest man or his wife had taken thought of the riches of the king when they devoted the turbot to him, and had considered what reward they should get, the fisherman would have been ready enough with answer. But as they had offered the turbot out of pure loyalty and reverence, because they conceived so fine a fish, such as never was seen by them before, must go whither their hearts most ascended, which was to the throne of the king, the good man knew not what to say, and indeed was all surprised and no little hurt by an offered reward. But after a little, and being once more asked by the king what payment would please him, he said, "Sire, I am but a poor man, and have but little knowledge; tell me, therefore, Rule you the realm by your armies?" "Not so," said the king, "nor by any outward force, but by my divine right to my people's hearts, being king." "True," said the fisherman; "and as I bring hither this turbot for that reason in the heart, as the king rules by the like reason, how need I any money for it, any more than the king needs force of arms in the realm?"

Thus Religion, like the offering of the fisherman, if it be builded in the soul will look for no rewards and no virtue of it but in the soul. But if it be builded on events and authority which are outward and historical, then will it look for results and rewards which are outward, to be brought about in like

manner by some events which shall happen. Or thus again and in brief I may express it: The sanctions and support of Religion are of two kinds,—first, the authority it rests upon; and secondly, the results or fruits of it. Now, both of these will be outward if either be.

But thus again, thereupon, we behold the religion which looks back to the past for its power also looking to the future for its recompense and virtue. For the outward value and reward which wait with expectation on the outward authority, never are to be found in the present. Here, at the moment, appear no greater glories or privileges or comforts for the believer than for the unbeliever, or even for the meek and faithful than for the proud and deceitful, for the brave and long-suffering than for the truant and time-pleaser. Therefore the outward rewards and advantages not here visible are conceived of as awaiting in a future heaven. The religion which looks back for its own image to a Palestine on earth, must look forward for its joys to a golden city beyond the earth; and so does it ever.

The nature or theory of Religion, when thus it looks back to a past epoch and to historical events or persons for its source or sanctions, and then thereby inevitably forward into the future for its virtue and recompense,—the nature or theory of Religion, I say, is then a bargain or barter, or a selfishness, a following after some advantage. So much belief or assent, acceptance of the ancient rules, wonders, books, ritual, creed, and, over against this, so much reward, glory, happiness, in a heavenly city. Thus Religion, by building on the past for its sanction, and thereby on the future for its value and virtue, becomes a kind of barter or covenanting with God. This is a very low thought of Religion. I can not see that it has more of wings and heavenly flight in it than any other selfish object, except for what effect may flow from the object of pursuit being so far off and now invisible. There is some virtue in pursuing what is not to be had instantly and is unseen; and the further away it is in time and the more beyond human senses, the greater is the virtue in the pursuit of it. But beyond this, I can see not why a selfish religion is more excellent for us than any other selfishness, or why to entreat for heaven will not degrade a prayer as much as to beg for riches, or why to plan and barter for

heaven is worship at all. In this state of Religion, in which it is a strain after salvation and pleasant things beyond, all the popular churches around us still linger. I say this without any contempt. Simply I see the fact, and say so, that they persevere in the ancient and primitive way. They are still building themselves not in the soul but on a history outside the soul, on a far era and long past events, and thereby they are looking forward to a heaven afar beyond, as the aim and finishing of the religion. But what I have to preach is that this is not the nature of Religion, nor has it grown truly unto the stature and true countenance of Religion, but is something far down and low in the unfolding of Religion and only slowly growing up to it. I apply to it the excellent law of virtue which Francis Newman has stated; for, says he, it is true that virtue will arrive at credit, honor and power in the world; but they who aim at the honor have not the virtue. In like manner, let it be true that Religion will lift us to great joys and powers and companies here or hereafter; but if we seek the powers and companies, we have not the religion. I think, unless I be far out in my observation, that a large part of the religion taught and experienced in the churches, is but preparation for entering the next world with *eclat*; and when I note the flurry of the preparation, the din of the prayers, the groans and sweat of the exertions, it seems to me sad and secular, like the noise and contention, the traffic, jobbing and bidding of the market place brought into "the house of prayer." The Master, the Son of Man, of Nazareth, would not suffer that men with men should trade and chaffer in the temple courts for gain; nay, but he made the whip of cords, we read, and drove out the traffickers, and scrupled not to say that their cheapening and higgling in the sacred place made it "a den of thieves." But how better is it to make the temple noisy with importunate prayers than with garulous negotiating? How better to bid and barter for heaven with professions, creeds, prostrations, groans and cries, than to do hawking and huckstering in the holy aisles for profits? How better to convert religion itself into a merchandise of satisfactions in due season, than to trade wares for present tolls in religious precincts?

Beautiful is quiet and peace. Beautiful and holy is a quiet and simple spirit in religion, which rises up silently unto prayer,

like the sun in the morning unto heavenly noon. And all pure and good is religion which is not an anxiety for heaven, but a simple trust and love and faithfulness—not "toiling and spinning" for robes to wear above, but, like the lilies, being lifted up in simpleness to rejoice, live and be white in the present light of God.

Have you heard of the dream she had—
  Theresa the Saintly?
Come, listen, ye good and bad!
  And heed it not faintly.

A weird, awful woman she saw,
  And wondered what brought her;
In one hand she bore flaming straw,
  In the other hand, water.

"Where bound?" asked Theresa. "O, tell."
  The answer was given:
"Theresa, I go to quench hell,
  And then to burn heaven."

"But why," asked the Saint, "do you make
  So wild an endeavor?"
"So that men for His own holy sake,
  May love God forever."*

*Epes Sargent.

RELIGION AND TIME.

III.

In two preceding sermons I have spoken of some relations of Religion to the past and, again, to the future. What now shall I say of the relation of Religion to the present?

The past and future can exercise tyranny over the spirit in Religion only together. Neither alone can reign. But crown one and instantly comes the other to be crowned as a colleague on the throne.

The past and the future are the same as memory and hope. Whoever gives himself to memory till it be a tyrant over him, and he live in it, neglecting the things at hand, will welcome hope to rule over him on the other side. There can be no other relief for him. From the tyranny of the past in memory he will find no escape, no comfort, except that hope which is an equal and subtle tyranny of the future. For if one give himself to the past, and refer his mind, his thoughts, his reverence, his religion, faith and revelation of God to the past, he will be void of comfort, joy, astonishment and power in the present, because he has bound himself to the past and the past is gone, and is not here to give him glories and perceptions and knowledge. It is fixed and done. No more can it effect him as the waving and tidal life of the present will, if he only cast himself on the breast of it. The present, however, looks but mean and unprofitable and deserted of the spirit to one who fixes his faith and wonder on a past history. Therefore, what comfort can he find but in looking over this present onward into a future, which then rules over him by golden hopes that the likeness of the past will return some time? Both memory and hope are most blessed powers in us; but naught is blessed when it has grown a Cæsar

over all else in us. Memories have a great part in happiness, and hopes nourish courage and courage again feeds hope very blissfully. But if once memory and hope claim all power, and rule us, and we lose ourselves in the indolence of their palmy and gorgeous tyranny, the dignity of the present is obscured, and in that cloudiness fades the most noble and thrilling part of all living and rejoicing.

I may illustrate by a picture of two kings and a peasant. The two kings are sitting in purple robes, idling and toying with their ornaments and jewels. Before them stands a peasant, a poor man, meanly clad, very sturdy, with a mattock in his hand wherewith he toils on this earth. The two kings are looking at the rough and ready laborer with lofty and superior smiles, or mayhap with contempt. The kings are the past and the future: the peasant is the present. If the kings can be stripped of their purple pomp and come down from the thrones, the three will be found very brotherly and well able to work together.

Now, that Religion must begin with awe of the past, or at least soon come thereto, and for a time find best its own countenance in that awe, I have said;* and that therewith there must grow up golden hopes in the future, a heaven of shining promises in the sky, also I have said.† These steps in Religion seem inevitable; at least, if we may conclude from the histories of all religions. But they are primary steps. After the primitive forms and conditions have served their end, it is well that they should pass away quietly; or, more exactly, it is well that the human mind should go on its way in courageous fashion, dropping any props or aids or manner of progress which once belonged to it but now are outgrown. For the essence of growth is the disuse of things that are spent; and a condition of growth is the power to perceive when the virtue of anything is spent, thereupon to disuse it and put away the weight and encumbrance of it.

Behold this plainly in the growth of the body. How were the body to grow without the instinct to perceive when the virtue of food is spent, thereupon to disuse the remains of it and cast them forth?

For other illustration, what if a man should go in frocks and knee-stockings all his life because so he dressed as a child,

* Sermon of Religion and Time, I. † Sermon of Religion and Time, II.

and found it then comely and suitable, and warm enough because he could go quickly into the house if he were cold?

The secret of advance and growth, as I have said, is to disuse what is spent, *after well spending it and extracting the virtue of it.* Wherefore nothing must be thrown away too quickly. This indeed seldom happens, and only with the rash and unaffectionate. But contrariwise, naught must be too stoutly and too long held too, cried up because once it has had a great or august virtue, albeit now all the virtue is spent and the husks of it are only empty baggage. It were well always to cleave stiffly to what once is obtained, says Bacon, "if time stood still; which contrariwise moveth so round, that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times are but a scorn to the new." Now, therefore, as growth is, first, to extract all the virtue of food and secondly to disuse it when so it is spent, it follows that we must be free in mind, neither chained to the past nor led captive by a new order, but large and wise, balancing well, and discerning what is spent, or so nigh spent that new things must be made ready, "and as the scripture saith, that we make a stand upon the ancient way, and then look about us, and discern what is the straight and right way, and so walk in it." But instead of this wisdom, we behold on all sides those who throw away wildly and wastefully the "ancient way" and dump it forth with unsober mind at the first tinkle of some new thing which catches their fickleness; but far more we see the numbers of those who hold fast to "the ancient way" and will not listen to parting with it, though time has "moved round" far past it, and all the virtue of it has been extracted long since.

So it is with religion which rests itself on the past, and builds its authority on historical events and persons, and thereupon also spies forward into the coming time, conceiving of a new golden age and of happy rewards in a future heaven. This is the very ancient way, the primitive steps of religion, and time has "moved round" far beyond them. What then happens if this ancient and venerable manner of religion be continued after the virtue of it is spent, when the proper era of it has gone by and time has moved beyond it?

Consider. This manner of religion dwells on a past glory as

the source of faith and on a future glory as the reward of faith. What can result therefrom after long process? When the mind so has gathered knowledge that it should be beyond and above these thoughts—what can result but that *the present shall be made barren to our minds and hearts?* And surely this is a very sad result; if the past and the future have nought to do for men but to make the present barren and dead, while we feed on memories and expectations, it is sad indeed. If religion be so needfully a child of the past as to its sanctions, and of the future as to its rewards, that the present lies between blank, unhallowed, unvisited of heaven, it is very sorrowful. Yet this is the result.

Attend first to miracles to see one way in which this result comes about. Religion is made to build itself on marvels and signs in a past epoch. Now, at first this does no harm, because similar miracles are supposed to be in the present also. The primitive mode of thought continues long and science grows but slowly, The same wonder-working visits of God which established the religion in the beginning are conceived as still occuring. Wherefore the present will seem as divine as the past. But at last such things are known not to be in the present, and no longer to be looked for. Science lifts up the idea of order and law, and thenceforth the miracles flee like rosy morning twilight before the full light of day in which men go forth to their labors. This knowledge being attained, if religion still found on miraculous deeds and signs, as vouchsafements from heaven in the past, divinity will seem perforce less imminent and present now than then in the old days when God walked with men and worked his wonders. And so *does* it seem indeed. Such is very sadly the effect of the adoration of the past in religion. Awe and joy in the present vanish. Far in the East are all the colors of the heavenly communications, miraculous incident, angelic exaltations. But here there is no Emmanual; he comes not, we are in a barren land; we must look far westward to a time when he shall come again and once more reveal glory.

The Northern myths of Europe contain a good, and even a moving example of this effect in religion. Among the Norsemen there was a tradition of a golden age of peace, prosperity, exaltation, when men were kind and the Æsir, their gods, full

of favors unto them. Consequently, the people looked on the present as only a bitter conflict soon to overwhelm gods and men in ruin. After this overthrow a new earth was to rise from the ocean, with new men to triumph in the immortal presence of Balder, the Beautiful. More reasonable, and perhaps on a higher plane in this matter, than the Christians, the Norsemen by no means dreamed of a ruin of earth alone. What the Æsir ruled, could not be desolated save with their ruin also. The gods too must be swallowed up in the darkness, if they could not prevent the darkness. In the new order a mighty Spirit, higher than the Æsir, was "to reveal himself to rule over the world through all eternity."

The history of Jesus is a like example. As long as the Apostles had the Master with them, they seem to have said little about the future, because they felt the present charged with the divine. But when Jesus became a memory and the heavenly witness seemed removed, then arose at once the dreams of the second advent, which have continued to excite men to the present day. And as a political element, at first very strong, dropped from Christianity, all the more it looked both backward and far forward. The past was filled with the light of the life of Jesus, wonderful and great; the future with corresponding expectations, to be imaged only in crystal arches and golden streets. Between, stood the present, unhallowed, deserted, blank, bleak and alienated,—and still so it stands "a vale of tears," a desert land, a devil's field, say the churches—a waste of woe of which only the edges far on either side cling with fingers of sand to a living green.

Consider, again, another way in which results a barrenness of the present from that manner of religion which builds on the past and thence projects into the future. By such religion, this world and our life is overflowed with contempt and brought to a shabby and mean fame. Under the influence of the past-look and the future-look in religion, which leaves the present unrespected and unhallowed, practical life is degraded and daily duties are abused. Now, this may happen in two ways.

First, life may become sordid, selfish, luxurious. The present is not grand; only the past. Therefore the present is not rousing; only the future. No awe of life, of present responsibil-

ity, of the greatness of opportunity, of the glory of labor, of the dignity of improvement, of the claim of all on each one—no such awe is like to arise in a time marked, if so I may speak, by a cessation of divinity,—God having been wonderfully present in the past and to be so with equal glory in the future, but here not visible nor working glories, but only ruling, if so I may say, at second hand, like a traveling landlord or a monarch afar off. No such thought of the present will tend to breed heroes, reformers, sisters of mercy, pure poets, soldiers of freedom, or the patient faithful who toil unwitnessed and unsung; no, but luxury and ease, self-indulgence, aimlessness, wanton uselessness, tyranny. For the present then is not sacred—only the miraculous past; nor calls and stirs up the soul—only the future heaven.

Or, again, the present may be left bare and unhallowed by another kind of evil, an anchorite contempt for the world and the body. This spirit in the name of religion despises the good work of God. I would not put this offence on the level of that other fruit of an unhallowed present, namely, the wanton plunging into pleasures; but it is very bad and has wrought much evil. Possibly there is as much defilement of the divine creation in contemning it and using it not at all, as in rioting in it and using it ill. Before we can help to make the world better by so much as one small step, we must love it as it is, and not believe it a devil's-wile.

Whether by the first way of despising the present, as a time worth no more than for wanton and selfish pleasuring or inglorious ease, or by the second way, a contempt of the world and the body as mere beggarly flesh, the religion whose life is of the past, whose desire is of the future, will cast an unhallowing beam on the life of the present. Yet not so aught it to be. Not so is God to be known. Not so will life be lifted up or religion be graced. Rather with all its voices, all its preachers and choirs, religion should sing with the poet,

> " Paradise and groves
> Elysian, Fortunate Fields, * * *
> * * * why should they be
> A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was?
> For the discerning intellect of man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe
> In love and holy passion, shall find these

A simple produce of the common day.
—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
Of this great consumation; and, by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures!"

It will not be astray if the growth of religion be defined as the process of the elevation of the present to divinity. Here must I fix the very seat of religion, in the *dignity of the present moment.* I look back for the growth and beginning of religion —this is no more than history; but *here*, in this very time for its authority.* I look forward for the greater moral triumphs and more devout beauty of religion—this is no more than righteous hope; but *here*, in this very time, for its sanctions, its virtue, its excellence. Yea, I will say its virtue and excellence even if there were no future. For were it *nothing* to be one of Rabbi Jehosha's angels?

"Rabbi Jehosha used to say
That God made angels every day,
Perfect as Michael and the rest
First brooded in Creation's nest,
Whose only office was to cry
Hosanna! once and then to die;
Or rather with life's essence blent,
To be led home from banishment.

Rabbi Jehosha had the skill
To know that Heaven is in God's will;
And doing that, though for a space
One heart-beat long, may win a grace,
As full of grandeur and of glow
As Princes of the Chariot know."

How pure, how religious the faith which glows with the divine candescence of self-forgetfulness! It is supreme content with God, and a quietude of love. Oh! let my soul say,—"This life is good, a great delight, an excellence, a blessing. I rejoice that

*While religion never looks to the past for *authority* when it has come to its fulness, yet always it looks behind or back in a sense, "underneath us," to "the everlasting arms." Thus it does by its nature; for religion is that sentiment, awe, love, which "binds us back" to our source But this is a past always touching the present and involved in the present. For it is not a religious thought that we were made once and done with; but that we are perpetually of one Source, from whom we *came*, in the mystery of time, but of whom we *come* continually, and "in him live and move and have our being. And this is the direct relationship of each spirit in itself, with no dependence on mediation in past or present. See Sermons I and II in this volume, pp 5 and 13 to 20.

I have lived. Are my past years nothing? And this very moment when I rejoice in the sweetness I have had, still sweeter to the last with the tenderness of reminiscence, is all this nothing, that I should repine if there were no more? I ask not what is in store for me, whether in love thou appoint more or in equal love now make an end. My spirit is overpowered with fifty years of loving-kindness in a universe passing and repassing with incessant God. It is good that I am what I am; and whatever thou ordainest is good,—yea the best!"

This attitude of soul is as perfect in ethics as in religion. Its moral excellence lies in its undivided emphasis on virtue. Moral worth is lifted up therein by reason of its own divine right. Too long has virtue been a pack-horse at the truck of salvation. But the test of virtue is disinterestedness. Nothing is virtuous which is a managing for admisson to palaces above. Morality of itself is commanding, imperative, sovereign, divine. It needs no sanctions. It dates from no epoch, nor points to any object. My vast faith, indeed, is that in dying we perish not, but live. Yet, whether we live after the death of the body or not, still it is better to be virtuous than vicious, kind than cruel, forgiving than revengeful; better to build up the body a holy sacrifice, than a profane altar of unhallowed rites; Better to expand the wings of the spirit than to flutter our day in impotence. Love, honor, truth, integrity, benevolence are good in themselves and now. Another life increases not their moral dignity anywhere nor their value here. Therefore, wait we with a loving quietness, having the one thing needful, which is the goodness of God witnessing within us, to give us knowledge of the good, that it *is* good.

Meantime,

> "O wealth of thought beyond all bound!
> Eternity each moment given!
> What plummet may the Present sound?
> Who promises a *future* heaven?"

At this moment creation culminates; not in the past, for it has been ever a-doing; not in the future, wherein not yet appears what we shall be; but NOW creation is at its height in God, and every instant it is finishing in him. Behold this plainly on the earth,—in the earth itself, which never was so lovely, never so free from roaring tempest and convulsions and fire and ice, in all its

æons of preparation, as now it is; in man, who never was so delicate in face and form, never so kingly in apprehension, never so sound in health, nor so wide in love and joy, as now he is; in animals and plants, all living creatures, which have been arising and refining and beautifying for vast æons, and never were so fair in form and nature, as now they are,—and by man's care, which is involved in God's care, they grow richer and fairer continually. Behold the same also in the infinite heavens, where "worlds without number lie in His bosom like children." What creations and abodes, beginning, growing, mid-way made, finished, ending, must space hold! What vastness, what inconceivableness, what life and effluence—all now at height in God, and never ceasing. Creation is not an act, but action, "new every morning and fresh every evening." When I awake, that instant creation is new and infinite, done for me.

It is certain that there never was so much knowledge of God as now, and never so many open ways to know of him as now, when the passing instant completes the record of his providence, and each soul can add its own experience to the gathered past.

The past is the development of knowledge, which by necessity always culminates *just now*; and the immanent order which reigns, forbids that any time should seem of more religious moment than any other, or more holy or authoritative to feeling or thought than that *last moment* which is *forever here* and finishes for the instant the Revelation of God.

The record of experience which we call the past is the foundation of knowledge. The sum of knowledge which the present is, is the home of religion. To religion the past is no more than the time when other men were religious; the future, the time when the children's children shall be religious. Religion lives, and is determined by *what is known of God*,—those thoughts about Him in which the forgoing living and learning of men *at this moment culminates*. Before this the spirit bows as revealing the Infinite, Eternal One who has upheld all the past, and now no more than in the past, and no less, and forever the same, rules "with the glory of a Father.

Not by reason of the soul's knowledge of any ways of God in the past, nor by reason of any desires of favor from him in the future, but by reason of its *ideal of him*, who is the culmina-

tion not only of the past, but of its own life, does the spirit worship and pray. By reason of all its feeling of his immanent love, of his supreme providence in justice and moral worth, of the marvelous order which is the shadow of his perfection on nature, of perfect holiness and truth, of perfect power, of his inward revelation and the soul's own sufficiency to itself through the divine communication; by reason, perhaps, most of all, of that ineffableness which our own being hath in him, which conceals him by his very nearness to us, and brings a measure of imperfection into all human dispositions or expression unto him, save a silence, a wonder of adoration—by reason of this the spirit worships and prays, with no thought of any past or future in the presence of the transcendent mystery from which time itself proceeds. Religion is our disposition of devotion toward the Supreme and Infinite One. But what he is, he is forever. Religion by its very terms, as relation between him and me, knows therefore nothing but the present moment, the impending NOW. We no more look back for Revelation than for Protection. He who, at this moment, shadows our feet with himself, at this moment also invokes us by the authority of the last issue of His Eternal Revelation.

Here then, we see what high and pure religiousness is—in two parts: First it is the thought and apprehension of God NOW; Secondly, and following therefrom, it is the glorifying of all life's deep things and all our duties NOW, of every small and obscure faithfulness, as in the presence of God, and as our post in his order. What can the greatest star do more than hold its place, and know it is its place in God, and beam therein? And whoso but feeds a love-lamp in the window of his eye, or gives forth a voice of kindly cheer, doth no less;

> "And God will listen amid the throng
> For his one breath of perfect song,
> That, in its simple human way,
> Says all the Hosts of Heaven can say"

HE THAT WAS TO COME.

"I that speak unto thee am he."—JOHN iv., 26.

I have noticed that in reading some poem or some scene in a story, or in being in some place or presence, we become impressed with the greatness and value of goodness. We say, "Goodness is the best, the most worthy thing; it is great and beautiful." This is always *a sudden experience.* We are reading or listening for amusement perhaps, or for information in some manner, not at all for moral enthusiasm or instruction. Suddenly the page or place is illuminated; almost we stamp our foot on the ground, like Galileo, exclaiming aloud, "It *is* true! It is not a mistake! Character *is* the great and perfect value! Holiness, Truth, Beauty, are the worthy things!" In his "Way toward the Blessed Life," Fichte says, "The enjoyment of a single hour passed happily in the pursuit of art or science, far outweighs a whole life-time of sensual enjoyment; and before the picture of this blessedness, the merely sensuous man, could it be brought home to him, would sink in envy and dismay." But so far as any are only creatures of sensation and seekers after pleasures, it is continually brought home to them that there is a better way of life, a transcendent nobility which shines when at all it is seen and at once is known to be the one real undying joy. And especially in so far as we know better than we do, we read or see or hear something which gives us suddenly such a rapturous sense how worthy, great, beautiful and strong faithfulness is, and how real religion is, and how pure and lovely is devotion, that we exclaim, "It is good for us to be here; we will build tabernacles and stay here forever." You will find that some eloquence, poem, music, in which one person can see only ordinary expression, common imagination, no large beauty, will lift another to the seventh heaven. This is because something

in his experience vibrates to those strings, and the piece suddenly lets in heaven on his sight, his love, his resolution. Sometimes this sudden sense of the greatness and beauty of holiness is roused by places or persons. The holy quiet and tender associations of a church may awake it, or such a heavenly countenance as sometimes one beholds in aged persons, or the innocence of a little child. We meet such a vision of goodness and behold the beauty suddenly, as if in turning a corner on some common errand, we beheld a grand and noble statue in a niche, not there when we passed the spot a half-hour before.

Here, in illustration, are some fugitive lines which I have met in many different places, named "Tired Mothers":

A little elbow leans upon your knee—
  Your tired knee that has so much to bear—
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
  From underneath a thatch of tangled hair.
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch
  Of warm moist fingers holding yours so tight,
You do not prize the blessing overmuch—
  You are almost too tired to pray to-night.

But it is blessedness! A year ago
  I did not see it as I do to-day—
We are so dull and thankless. and too slow
  To catch the sunshine till it slips away.
And now it seems surpassing strange to me
  That while I wore the badge of motherhood
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly
  The little child that brought me only good.

And if, some night, when you sit down to rest,
  You miss the elbow on your tired knee—
This restless curly head from off your breast,
  This lisping tongue that chatters constantly;
If from your own the dimpled hands had slipped,
  And ne'er would nestle in your palm again,
If the white feet into the grave had tripped—
  I could not blame you for your heart-ache then.

I wonder that some mothers ever fret
  At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints, when the days are wet,
  Are ever black enough to make them frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
  Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor—
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot
  And hear it patter in my house once more;

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
  To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky,
There is no woman in God's world could say
  She was more blissfully content than I!
But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
  Is never rumpled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest has flown—
  The little boy I used to kiss is—dead!

A man I am acquainted with carried these lines in his wallet, and never he could read them without running to take all his children in his arms with such an unwonted solemnity of fondness that the little ones looked wonderingly while they returned the caresses. I know one, too, who never can read a particular passage in "David Copperfield" without instantly going in search of his wife to confer a look or word that may add to her happiness.

The principle herein is that God sets on us such responsibility that each one must say to his neighbor the words of Jesus at the well of Sychar. Like the Samaritan we go with a pitcher to draw water or after some other business, and beside the well or the work-bench or in the business house, we find a wonderful stranger. Perhaps we have seen the person before; no matter. Perhaps a thousand times before; it is the same. At that moment he is the stranger from heaven. He tells us all that ever we did; he throws a sudden light over the future; he arouses in us a sense how majestic, strong and beautiful sincere goodness is. Happy for us if we understand that this is the language by which he says to us directly, "I that speak unto thee am he." He is the prophetic He. We behold a miracle of the Divine Providence. The book, the picture, the voice, the person, at that instant have authority from God. To you, that person is "He that was to come," your Messiah, your Saviour, your Confessor. Daily I see more clearly that we are placed here with a mission ordained for us. 'Tis not needful that we know it, further than to keep clean, do well and defend the divine counsels in the conscience from admixture with a vagrant will. In that we are commissioned. When we meet the person to whom we are sent, they feel such motion within, such arising of joy, faith and purpose on that instant, as is a declaration from heaven as plainly as if we said, "I that speak unto thee am he." You that speak to me are he—I that speak to you am he—if so be that there be anything in us at the moment which is God's providing of grace for us by one another.

I had some little business with a friend, in ending which I said, "That now is finished for the present, and I am obliged to you for your goodness." He answered, "Perhaps I am obliged to you for my goodness." The words startled me. I could not

shake them off. I perceived we are all obliged to each other for our goodness. Each to each is "He that was to come" in those moments of unconscious testimony when we are God's providence to some one and fill some soul with celestial messages. For what could be more authoritative, more divine, than the impression at that instant made on my spirit?

Often in the mimic life of the drama this inspiring quality is displayed powerfully; many a player, great or humble, has been "He that was to come," a providential man to some among the spectators, he being for the instant transparent to beauty and goodness which shine through him as through a glass.

I once attended a play, taking a friend with me, the play including a dance or ballet in one scene. While the lithe dancers were weaving their mazy patterns, as if a gorgeous tapestry of which their bright costumes were the threads and their lissom bodies the shuttles, my duller sense beheld it only as one sight, singling out no particular element thereof; but my companion had nicer perception; she said to me, "There is one face among those dancing girls I want you to look at, it is so sweet and child-like, as innocent as a babe's." I looked and saw. I perceived also how solicitous the young thing was about the dance, how very watchful as to her part and the procession of the intricate figures. It was plain that she saw neither people, nor lights nor scenes, nor had any gleam of the purple and gold in which she marched—knowing only the dance in which she had her part to maintain unless the whole should be overthrown. Somehow, from that moment, I ceased to follow the weaving pattern. I beheld only that one living shuttle of the tapestry. It was as if nature as an artist had suddenly descended crying, "This is 'prentice work; I discern one figure fit to stand, but thus and thus I efface the remaining"—with two or three broad sweeps of the brush obliterating the scene by a neutral background on which the one form was left shining.

Have you not noticed in theatres how a humane sentiment, or even a common moral platitude, spoken in a sincere manner and with circumstance, will win applause?

Nor shall I forget, as long as I can remember aught beautiful, one little simple act which I witnessed in that mimic life, which has a residence in me, like a beautiful picture or a strain

of clear music. It was done by E. L. Davenport, a high master in his art, who long ago took his flight by death to the unseen kingdom, out of which, I do believe, shone through him the beauty that made him to me at that instant "Him that was to come." He was playing Brutus in Shakespeare's glorious drama of Julius Cæsar. He had arrived before the plains of Philippi, on which the armies were to fight the next day. It was night. The arrangements were made, the plans laid, the last words said between the officers; Cassius, Titinius and Messala departed, leaving Brutus alone with his young page, Lucius, whom he asked to play for him a little on his lute, but added:

Bru. I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.
Luc. It is my duty, sir
Bru. I should not urge thy duty past thy might, I know young bloods look for a time of rest.
Luc. I have slept, my lord, already.
Bru. It is well done, and thou shalt sleep again; I will not hold thee long; If I do live, I will be good to thee.

Then the boy touched his instrument and began a song; but tired Nature was too much for the young muscles. The song became slow, wandered from time and tune, and ceased at last after one or two mutterings, as the wind goes down. The boy slept. Brutus, listening, said, "This is a sleepy tune," then turning and seeing the boy asleep, exclaimed:

"O murderous slumber
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy
That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night;
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.
If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument.
I'll take it from thee "

Here the gentle hero rose, softly approached the sleeping boy and with tender care unlocked his hands from the lute. Then, for a moment he stood still, contemplating silently the child sinking deeper and deeper into slumber; at last, with a slow tenderness of manner, he unclasped from his neck the cloak which he had just put on, and carefully folded it about the boy to cover him from the night air. This done he added gently:

"Good boy, good night.
Let me see, let me see,—is not the leaf turned down
Where I left reading? Here it is, I think."

It was when Brutus covered the boy with his cloak that the human nature of all persons so was touched that the simple act

drew forth applause, because it was beautiful. I added then a new chapter to my scriptures which never I can read without that act and picture rising before me, and my soul is stirred.

Sometimes how unexpectedly this heavenly light beams, breaking from some other place as humble as the manger. At one time having a very beautiful alto-relief cast in plaster from the work of a sculptor of great merit, I wished to have it painted so as to preserve the surface from injury, but painted so delicately as not to obscure any of the delicate lines and touches of the artist's chisel wherein dwelt the exquisite expressiveness of the work. I selected for the task an old man who was a sign-painter. I knew nothing of his skill with the brush, but I had seen him and he had impressed me as conscientious. Believing myself unknown to him, I carried him the cast and stated my wish. He looked long and reverently at the beautiful work of art, finally saying that in common he would refuse such a task, but if I were pleased to trust him he would try. At the appointed time I visited his little shop, to find my valued object painted to my utmost satisfaction. Praising the work and thanking him, I asked the price, saying that I would be glad to pay well and add my thanks thereto. He said that he would value the thanks, but, if I pleased, he would take no pay. Much surprised, I said, "Dear Sir, you took this task, as I readily could see, with some reluctance, and you have performed it in a masterly way. I know well the time and pains that go to such a work; you must permit me to reward you accordingly." "No," he said, "I want no pay; the work itself was pay; it was a labor of love." "True," I answered. "So is all good work. Nevertheless, you must not give away your skill and time, for no one should wish to receive them for nothing." "But," he answered, "you made your return beforehand." Seeing my great surprise, he reminded me of his coming once to an office in which I was employed. "Yes," I said, "it was the sight of you then that led me to you for this painting; but I supposed not you would know me." "Perhaps you can recall," he said, that the chief officer had turned me off roughly or at least indifferently, and pushed my business aside. Finding I could get no attention, I was going out mortified and hurt, when you came to me and said a few words that put things straight in my mind if not in my affairs. Now, you must take

this painting as an old man's gratitude." Much moved and with a sense of the presence I stood in, as if suddenly I knew it to be of God, I accepted the gift. The sculptor, when he afterward beheld it, exclaimed with pleasure, saying that no one of his works ever had been so exquisitely and conscientiously finished with the brush.

I can not forget that workman, nor cease to think of my experience in his presence with reverence. I often turn unto him in mind. I wonder where he is. I wonder what his life had been. No doubt he had sorrows; I feel them. No doubt joys; I am glad of them. He was old; I wonder if he has now opened a new sense to beatific certainties of which I dimly dream or hope. Be all that as it may, I know that in that man in that little poor shop I met one who was to come to me. I stood face to face with the providence of God giving me a celestial sight through that servant of his who thought only to offer an old man's gratitude.

'Tis not even necessary to see the one who is to come to you. From very far away, or from long past time, he will raise a tumult in your soul by which he says, "I that speak unto thee am he." I met a record of a life which stirred me mightily when intelligence from the Sandwich Islands brought the news of the death of Ragsdale, the governor of the mournful settlement on the Island of Moloka. He was an orator of great influence in the kingdom, bred to the law, speaking English and Hawaiian with equal ease. One night, sitting in his office studying an absorbing law case, the chimney fell suddenly from his lamp; he picked it up quickly to replace it, forgetting that it was heated intensely. He remembered the heat immediately, but oh! he felt it not. The hot glass was the same to his touch as a cool and pleasant object. He looked at his hands; there was no sign of a burn. Many times he repeated the experiment with the same result. How he faced that fatal sign in the stillness, the darkness, the solitude, that terrible message written veritably on his body by a hand of flame, as on a wall, suddenly,—I have not read—I know not that there was a human eye or ear there present to perceive. He sat repeating the experiment which doomed him, the favored, the prosperous, the powerful, to a loathsome banishment from the face of healthy human beings. He knew that he had the

leprosy or elephantiasis, the terrible and incurable disease of the skin which prevails in tropical places. By this fearful malady, the skin is thickened and loses its sensitiveness. Medical authority soon confirmed the apprehensions of the afflicted man, and at once he informed the civil officers of his condition. But no one wished to move in his arrest according to law. Finding that his eminence and character was respected to that great degree, he delivered himself up to the authorities and was sent to the Island of Moloka where victims of the disease are secluded. He was made governor of this sad community of eight hundred persons and held the office when he died. He took up his fate with so much goodness and so sweet a spirit, so devoted himself to the mournful people whose wretchedness he shared, ruled so wisely, made so many reforms and diffused so much relief about him, that the sufferers loved and revered him as a father. I have read a like story more lately of the life of a Roman priest on the same sad island.

How little we know of life? When some form of it at once so strange and so noble sweeps by us on wings, to be "He that was to come to us," how we wonder and gaze with awe!

If this be the way of Providence, so great a wonder of the moral government of God, that each one thus is made "Him that was to come" and endowed with a saving mission unto others, which silently and unconsciously he is fulfilling to the blessing and salvation of the persons appointed to meet him, surely in this do we find laid on us a very grave and high responsibility—the "blessing of responsibility," as a noble soul used to say. The ancient fable of the fall of Lucifer has certainly this much of truth, that naught can be possible unless its opposite be so. The creature made for light, on that account may elect the darkness. A gigantic mountain, whereon a man being perched he may see the world, if it crumble or come down in land-slides or in spring torrents when the trees that sheltered the soil have been cut off, delivers terrible ruin upon the plain below, spreading a desert of inhospitable rocks where were fertile gardens, so the Son of God, who is lifted up to such a height of providential import and is sent as "He that is to come" to many who await the coming, from that height may cast himself with a terrible fall into gulfs "as deep as heaven is high." He may be so unfaith-

ful, so errant, so unmindful of that Messianic birth which he had and of the mission of glory which he has, that he may be only a useless loiterer by the way, or even a teacher of evil things, a minion of evil. It behooves us to look to our characters. For it is by this, by what we are and do show ourselves to be continually to that infallible sense of human beings by which they know the holy and the true, and detect counterfeit or base alloy, by this it is, that we are ordained sons of God to all other sons of him, especially to the wild and wayward; by this that we must fulfil the appointed mission and meet our fellow being to be known by him as "He that is to come to him." If we be simply good and true, upright, just, kindly, gentle, modest, chaste, unselfish, devoted, humane, sincere,—this is that "virtue" that will "go out of us" when but the hem of our garment sweep some one or be seized a moment by some one to whom we are "He that was to come," by the divine witness of a cure wrought or health imparted, while we are thinking of other things or persons in the throng, or beyond it of other ties and duties. I think I see it so clearly that I dare to say I am sure of this, that God does elect, appoint and send each one of us as truly as ever any saint or prophet of old, whether in Palestine or any other place, to be his sons and to bear witness of him, to speak, heal and bless. And if we bear the witness, then we are not left alone. By ways that no knowledge can explain and no experience exhaust, God testifies unto us; as Jesus said to the cavilers, who bad him rebuke his friends because they were singing with triumph and crying out in their joy, "I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

But this much certainly always we may do,—while knowing that it is by what we are in our hearts that we become the ordained servants and messengers of God who opens passages for our influence when we know it not—this much we may attend to, viz: to be at pains to offend not any one, by bad example or covert sneer at good things, or bold irreverence, or worst of all, by ill talk and vile suggestion in which many appear to find their only humor and knowledge. It is a vile thing to make oneself a sink or sewer of infectious filth; but it is abominable and devilish when much has collected and rotted together, to spread it over the earth. If a man will dig in himself a cess-pool for corrupted

things, let him observe the rules whereby we order the escape-pipes of dwellings. For no one builds a receptacle for disgusting matters, forthwith to turn them out again, but to keep them hidden and harmless. So let whoever inclines to heap up such matters within him and defile the purity of his mind, at least keep them pent up in that pit which he has made of himself, that their black vapors darken not the sky and infect not the common air of life. Consider, fellow man, that if your companion of the moment relish your loose talk, your gross story, your wanton allusion, you poison a creature already sick; but if he relish it not, 'tis a sad and painful wrong to humiliate a clean spirit. You take a mean advantage. For what can one do whom thus you dishonor? It is hard to turn and walk away unanswering. So to do seems rude; it expresses a censure of you which he may shrink from. 'Tis a mean advantage, and dishonorable,—as if you seized some weaker person and tied him up brutally before shocking sights.

But turn from this picture. There are two pictures hanging on opposite walls. I have looked for a few moments at the one behind me. It is a picture of night, having no sun in it, nor moon or stars even, nor any light but the red eye of a thief's lantern. Turn again to the other. It is a picture of light and sunshine, it has a broad highway in it, shaded with arching trees in which birds sing, and higher up, with great white clouds like silver fleece, rolling in the brilliant blue. Along the highway many people walk and children play, culling the flowers. The people seem to be in earnest talk, cheerful but full of intention. What is noticeable is the look of eager questioning in all the eyes and in the parted lips—plainly in all the same question, "Where is he that was to come?" And to that question God ordains every man in that company to answer to his neighbor, "I that speak unto thee am he."

ADMIRATION, HOPE, LOVE.

"Now abide Faith, Hope, Love; and the greatest of these is Love.—I Cor., xiii, 13.

"We live by Admiration, Hope and Love."—Wordsworth.

All Paul's writings show plainly that these words must be understood according to the ideas of religion which were current among the Christians. With these ideas Paul's soul was on fire. To him Faith meant belief that Christ was the appointed Savior of mankind, the messenger and teacher from heaven whose death was a propitiatory sacrifice by which all the common sacrifices of the temple were done away, and paid in one forever, and the world saved. Hope meant confidence in a blissful hereafter, a home in the kingdom of heaven, soon to come, a place in the glorious army of the saved secured by the sacrifice of Christ to those who embraced it; for the dead should arise, to come back in glory, and those who were not dead should be caught up into the air and changed in the twinkling of an eye to meet Christ and share his triumph. Love meant kindness and tender fellowship among the brethren; but also an immense unlimited fellowship with all men, a devotion to mankind, an enthusiasm for the great salvation *as offered to all*, a wish and a labor to embrace the whole world in it. For Paul, though a Jew, by no means would hear of any Jewish fold of Grace. Fervent in love and burning in words, he announced liberty from the Jewish law and the calling of the gentiles. And this liberty in Love and Love in liberty he called greater than the Faith or the Hope!

Now, for us of course, the special circumstances have vanished. With them have gone too the restricted meaning of the text. But the words, in a larger sense easily settled on them, indeed haunting or hovering over the local and temporary sense of them, like a spirit, are grand words. They have a course to run world-wide and time-long.

Wordsworth has a line which is the same as these words of Paul, with the enlarged sense which lapse of centuries, and the spiritual growth of the world, supply. The poet says, "We live by Admiration, Hope and Love." This is the Pauline three, Faith, Hope and Love. For Faith has deep color of awe and wonder in it; and Admiration means wonder, especially, in present usage, wonder mingled with pleasing emotions, as approbation, esteem, love or veneration. To wonder is health, strength, joy. If I must let wonder slip at the beck of books, if explanation dissolve awe, then better the ancient poetry, that peopled tree, hill, sod, clouds and waters with living spirits,—so might I have visions

> "that should make us less forlorn,
> So might I standing by this pleasant lea
> Behold old Proteus rising from the sea,
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

But wonder grows with knowledge. For a brute-stare sees only the outside; the which may be new, odd, foreign, but never wonderful. For all things are like words. New syllables may be strange, but if admirable, 'tis in what they signify. Conceive a savage, a bushman, a hottentot, or whatever one may be the noblest of all children of the forest, led through a concourse of manufactures. There would be astonishment; or if more, a perplexed amazement, helpless, bewildered, terrified. But astonishment, stupefaction, bewilderment, are not wonder. The intelligent and civilized man, especially one who has a trained and stored faculty, walks among a prodigious display of nature and mankind calmly, joyfully, with a rising exhilaration of wonder. Wonder is born of knowledge, especially of knowledge so brooded as to bring the mind to life and give not merely apprehension but comprehension, not information only, but insight and power.

Once I stood with a thoughtful and eloquent preacher looking at some works of one of the most notable mechanics I ever knew, a man of great attainments, a very delicate workman, an inventor of rare and facile genius and of scientific knowledge. The next Sunday, with the mechanic, I listened to the preacher. After the grand sermon the man of handicraft went to the man of pen-craft and said he was filled with wonder at the great dis-

course, and especially at the sermons from week to week; "not," said he, "so much at this sermon, or any one, for I know the power of work and time, and I can conceive how you could bring forth such a thing by long labor and slowly and in small numbers; but how you can be ready with high discourses every week, and all so like in fine quality, is a matter of great wonder to me. The abundance, efflorescence, the perpetual out-pouring, confounds me." Now, it so happened that the preacher, after looking at the mechanic's engines, had been regarding him with the greatest wonder and expressing the same to me. He answered him that he looked with a kind of awe on the mechanic's power over intractable substance, that he marveled at his endless resources of ingenuity, that his skill and fertility were great wonders to him, and that the outpouring from his mind of one device after another and of engines that moved like life, seemed to him like a miracle. Thereon I saw that the root of the mutual wonder of these men was an equal appreciation of the cost of an idea, and that, knowing and understanding this, each must go wondering always at ideas in proportion as they exceeded or varied from his own domain of labor. I perceived that there was no health for either of them but in admiring the other, with reverence.

It is happiness and health to wonder at common things, that is, to perceive in common and ordinary matters underlying laws, meaning, effects, infinite relations. And indeed, if at all we are to have the health and life of admiration, we *must* wonder at wayside events. For who has large and adventurous things? Great opportunities, imposing spectacles, vast experiences, grandeur and might, draw near rarely, and to few. With all persons, routine is tame; many—what else but routine have they? Only the few (and pity it is to say so; sometime it will be otherwise) float on the ocean or climb majestic mountains, or see continents of ice, or travel among strange people, or know what the tropics are, or traverse the heavens with the eye of a great lens. But the many are not left comfortless. They have the resources of wonder within themselves, if so be that they have enlarged both *mind* and *feeling*. Having no Alps near, and no way of journeying to them, have we then no hills unto which to lift up our eyes? Nay, we may go mountain-climbing among our neighbors' moral qualities, among common interests of life,

wonted facts of experience, familiar expressions of faces, the ordinary substances of daily use, the acknowledged beauties of the earth and the uniform sublimity of the sky. For herein are heights and depths unexplored. But the explorers must be Knowledge, Humility, Admiration.

To wonder is to put things in their true places, to see them as they are, in their unity, not detached but existing one in an another, inhering together in one individual majesty. A philosopher pondered on the spectacle of a fly walking on the stone pillar of a great cathedral, being occupied wholly with the roughness and crevices of the surface of the pillar it walked on. Now, it is well to be as the fly to a degree, as indeed we must be, and look at things one by one; but if we put them never again together in one thought, as they are in their being, we shall not know the temple we live in, under the dome of the sky. Wonder becomes worship when we look with awe while before our eyes and to our rapt apprehension the One goes forth in the Many and the Many return again into the One.

Hope is the next element of life, according to apostle and poet. Paul gives hope a very wide and deep foundation, in another epistle. He says, in his letter to the Romans (v. 4) that we ought to take heart in our troubles, because tribulation worketh patience and patience probation, or proving of ourselves that we may know what we are, and probation hope. Thus Paul seats hope in discipline of character. It is to him a power of the soul that grows with the exercise of the soul, with insight, perception, exaltation.

Hope dwells in what some ancient thinkers called the "pleroma," fullness, the round heaven of all possibilities, the portal of perpetual creation. The past is gone, gone with glories, with crowns, triumphs, revelations; but GONE, as if no glories or triumphs ever were. The present goes while we speak of it. It is but lapse, flow, motion, the rush of a stream, the ascent of flame, or a pause, as it were, in the eternal ongoing that we may note the idea of duty,—a divine pause thereby, and yet a speck, a mote in a vast space, a little island beaten by an illimitable sea. In the sea are the treasures of mystery, invitation, courage, majesty. What is the past or the present before the eternity and infinity of Hope? But the future comes on without failure

or error, becoming every instant the present and forthwith swallowed in the past, yet undiminished, the "pleroma" of possibilities, where Hope has infinity to shine over, like a sun vast enough to be the center of space.

> "In the future thou shalt find
> How far the fact hath left behind
> Thy fondest dreams."

We live in the future, as apostle and poet say, because, though here in the present moment we be stayed with duty, with divinity dwelling in the unconditional OUGHT, in the last Scripture of all revelation, yet the springs of our life are in the ever-becoming. "Hear O Israel,—the ETERNAL is God, the ETERNAL is One."

> "Whether we be young or old,
> Our destiny, our being's heart and home
> Is with Infinitude, and only there;
> With Hope it is, Hope that can never die,
> Effort and expectation and desire,
> And something evermore about to be."

This it is that holds us, as it has been said of Beethoven's music that its great splendor is the rush of it, as it seems, from an inexhaustable source, where there is more, more, more, and still without end, more.

Hope is not a wish. We may wish things which we cannot have because they are impossible; or it is certain we shall not have them. As for example, that we had wings and could float in the air like birds, to skim mountain peaks by a delicious aerial exercise; or that we could visit the moon or planets; or that we could have long years of traveling on this earth. But Hope is *desire assuaged with reason.* The reasons may be external, as those for hoping to live from year to year, or to complete some work; or internal, in the mind itself, which seems to foresee or forefeel something, by force of its own nature; as the hope of an inner development, of the justification of some great dream, of the perfection of some sight or thought now dim within us, clouded, half-seen, half-heard, but foretelling some great perception yet to come. A friend wrote me, "Somehow I seem to myself to be always on the threshold of something much better than ever yet I have done."

The more a hope rises inwardly, apart from circumstances,

beyond the court of will, the grander the hope is, because it rests not on the counting of events but roots in the nature of things. Such a hope is the immortal life. Just as Paul's, *Faith*, meaning belief in a special dispensation, is expanded by the poet into the grander thought of worship which is intelligent awe and wonder confronting creation, so the hope of immortal life is lifted from the dramatic triumph of a scheme or of one great person, to an inheritance of thought itself, to a hope founded on grounds internal and spiritual, asking no report from any outward condition, accepting indeed all the intimations that rain from the heavens on every side, but independent of all and needing only the soul's knowledge of itself. Hope is not proof, not sight, but wish with grounds. When sublime, as when the wish is vast and the grounds inward, like the hope of everlastingness, it is not to be pushed away jauntily or sullenly or defiantly, for that will be but a pedant's vanity or a clown's ignorance or a lordling's pride. It is true, indeed, that we may take this mighty hope and glory unfairly, thereby stripping duty of its dignity, its design and defence; true that so it may be described as to make it no more than the ravishing or horrible reward of this life's deeds, the indolent refuge of virtue or the idle torment of vice. But this is abuse and defamation. Still it endures, that dream which arises in us when sense is shut, which, awaking, we remember in spite of sense; it is still that hope whose ground of existence is wholly in the soul itself and asks no leave to be from any outward things, nor from any such dreads extinction. It has the mark of majesty. It is a hope worthy of the mind and has been a spring of life in high souls. Says a writer, "An immortal soul of life, a life kept close to the imperishable, knows of the deathlessness, and none other can know * * * All in general can see; but many, it is evident from countless testimonies, cannot see *what there is to be seen.* * * * It is only when one is not conscious of himself, that he acknowledges a possible grave. * * * People ask if they shall live after death who have not yet lived at all, and the only answer is, *Live Now*!

The third of the elements in which we live according to apostle and poet, and by the apostle's words the greatest of the three, is Love. It needs no rehearsing that love is an exceeding

great joy, the most blissful of all human powers. Love seems the faculty which leaps first from God into his creatures; for the poor brutes share it with us, even sometimes to its most woeful ecstasies. Heart-binding deeds are like white-clad priests feeding an altar of memory with perpetual flame. Even thought and worship draw sweetness from human love. The simple pure devotion of loving is the deepest well of blessedness, yea, of power, compared to which the privilege of being loved is as naught.

Love is in two kinds; impersonal or human love, which surrounds humanity with solicitous interest and sets fire to heroism; and personal love, of lovers, of friends, of relations, which selects few. Belike this love of chosen persons was not in Paul's mind when he wrote, but surely it was in the poet's.

Now, this is to be said, that the second kind of love, the love of persons chosen by us, will not be noble, nor have wings for the heavens, but plod on the earth meanly, unless the first kind, the humane love, be also living in the heart. This it is which lifts human love into human resemblance; for it is doubtful if any man had ever a devotion to another, more perfect than some brute creatures have shown. But love which is tender to its own sometimes is seen in a nature ferocious and implacable toward others, or moved to little pity and no affection by mankind. But it is not very grand to love simply so far as some person is one's own. It is noble to love first in a beloved person a fairer sight which we have received by him of traits that make humanity sacred and draw us devoutly to our race. It is noble, too, to be quickened by one love to all other loves, so that by our friend we become a friend to man. And, when we think of it, how indeed is it possible to love some person nobly if we love not the better our human kind which has in every child thereof so much that is in his soul whom we love? Or how is it possible to be stirred unto anyone with love having a moral worth, an ethical reverence and mental communion, if never before we have been moved to love and brotherliness by human nature, nor adored the heights of virtue where saintly souls, historic or obscure, have lived? Is it any better to love a skinful of bones than to cherish a bag of coins—if both only because they are

one's own? But if we cherish the body because of a good and precious soul therein dwelling, how is this possible if we love not the like soul in mankind? Nay, the poet who utters my text recommends even the love (if so we may name the sentiment) of natural objects, trees, flowers, brooks, all natural beauties, as a source of the refining, elevating and strengthening of love in us. He says:

"The man
Who in this spirit communes with the forms
Of nature, who with understanding heart
Doth know and love such objects as excite
No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No vengeance and no hatred needs must feel
The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose,
But seek for objects of a kindred love
In fellow natures, and a kindred joy.
Accordingly he by degrees perceives
His feelings of aversion softened down;
A holy tenderness pervades his frame.
His sanity of reason not impaired,
Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
From a clear fountain flowing, he looks around
And seeks for good; and finds the good he seeks;
Until abhorrence and contempt are things
He only knows by name; and, if he hear
From other mouths the language which they speak,
He is compassionate; and has no thought,
No feeling which can overcome his love."

True it is, and let us be very sure of it, that he who feels but little for the human family of God, will not be the best lover of any one thereof; nor will he who has no brotherhood glowing in him ready to burst into flame at human heroism or suffering, love you the better for your own obscure sacred devotion; nor he who looks with apathy on the struggles of mankind, be the most quick to a comrade's pain. He whose love you best may trust, that it will endure through all storms, sorrow, good or ill report, is he whose love of you roots in the same things which transport him with mingled awe and joy when he looks on the countenance of the One in the Many, beholding the struggles of his brother men.

Now abide Faith (or, in the poet's phrase, Admiration) Hope and Love. By Hope the soul is exalted and bred in grand thoughts of the meaning of the things provided for us.

This is life. By Admiration the mind lifts all things to an eternal lineage, and the

> "heart is at the secret source
> Of every precious thing."

This is religion. By Love we exalt all mankind to a station of honor. This is fellowship. By Love, also, one sets on high another, to glorify and cherish him, and mingle with him to the production of a common nature which is not either one of them but both in one. This is a blessed communion.

LOVE TO GOD.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."—Matt. xxii, 37.

Here, and in many other places in the teachings of prophets and holy men, we are commanded to love God. Therefore, the pulpit rings with the same command. Often it is taught rudely, coarsely, and enforced selfishly. Then the soul revolts, if it have come to spiritual modesty, shrinking exceedingly perhaps from the love that is commanded.

Indeed, I have observed, if I mistake not, that there is a natural shrinking of the spirit from love to God when the love is enjoined as a duty and necessity. Even though it be delicately, graciously and beautifully urged, I have observed a shrinking from *the duty* of love to God. Indeed I know not what kind of love can be claimed as a duty without being shaken and confounded. For the precious things of love are not to be commanded but attracted. No physician can heal a flagging heart by saying, " Go to, now! beat and live;" nor can one arouse to life the spiritual heart by saying, "Go to, now! love; it is commanded!" And when especially we speak of love to God, we shrink from such a command because not only it is contrary to the nature of love, which is not to be ordered by decree, but also it is beyond our native power. We feel no such love in us; perhaps we have a fear or consciousness of incapacity thereto. Not only we love him not, we think, but we feel not able to that end. No love arises. We know not how to call it forth, or that we can; and to face it as a stern duty, as the most sacred of obligations, as the first and great commandment, is a hard thing. Often to sensitive natures no doubt it is a terrible thing, sometimes bowing them down to despair.

I can remember well my thoughts about loving God, when I was a child. From the pulpit, from my Bible, from my good

teacher with whom I lived away from home, I heard constantly of this duty. I was told that I *must* love God, with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. I must love him better than all that was dear to me. I must give my love deeply, fervently, with perfect devotion and self-surrender, with the heart's whole power and store. And my heart simply answered, "I cannot, I *cannot*. This love will not come. I cannot create it. When all is done that I can, I yet love my father and mother and brothers, and I love not God. Then I was told that this inability was the proof of a bad heart, because the natural heart is at enmity with God." Sinfulness, they told me, was choking the soul's power of loving the Maker, making it cold and hard unto him. But this frightened without helping me. For it gave me no power to make what can not be made, nor to call from the deep by will what cometh above will. Still I knew that I loved my mother and brothers the best. Nay, I could not see that at all I loved God.

But now, I have come to understand that my sorrowful and struggling sense of having no love to God sprung not from depravity of heart or sinfulness, but simply was a misunderstanding of the term. I knew not what love to God meant. A like misunderstanding I have found to be so common that the time, I think, will be used not ill this morning if I explain very briefly and simply what it seems to me love to God is in truth.

We will ask, then, first, What is love? Have you tried ever to analyse love? Have you asked yourselves ever what you do when you love anyone? The act of loving is a very complex affection, by no means simple and ultimate. Love always comprises two elements, and generally three.

First, love contains desire,—desire for the love of the beloved. Love always wishes to place its seal on the beloved and say, "*This is mine.* Love comprises also desires for the happiness, prosperity, safety and joy of the one beloved. All these desires form part of the complex act of loving.

Secondly, love commonly comprises respect or esteem. But this element not always is present. Sometimes a wife, more often a mother, will love unfailingly a husband or son or daughter whose riotous or desperate life consumes respect. But esteem commonly is present in the complex affection of love, and always

in blessed and happy love. Now, this element of esteem is a moral element. Esteem is reverence for high moral qualities inhering in a person. It is called forth by the contemplation of noble traits beheld in a living soul. It is declaration of merit or excellence.

Thirdly, there is yet the element which is primary in the complex act of love. Like desire and the moral sense, this element is ultimate, simple, individual, a primary power or faculty of us. I mean the indefinable somewhat which all feel but cannot describe, for which the best name is *Tenderness*. This I call an ultimate fact or power. It cannot be analysed. It streams in the soul of itself, by virtue of our nature. It eludes definition. It has no parts by which to be pictured or described. But every soul knows by experience this tenderness which flows out to others, inexpressibly, deeply, joyously, asking only to flow. Flow it will, without permission. Its justification is in itself. Now, this tenderness streams spontaneously and sweetly in response to what I may call *relations of nearness* between ourselves and others; the nearness of family ties of long acquaintance and companionship, of similar nature, endowments, tastes, aspirations, temperament. The kinds of nearness which call forth this tenderness are as delicate, indefinable, inexpressible as tenderness itself. Each person has a charmed circle, larger or smaller, but not very large with any, into which one must find the way and creep near in order to receive the precious abundance of the soul's high, pure, serene and unlimited tenderness.

These three elements, then, combine to form the complex affection and emotions of love as every day we feel them: Desire, which is the appropriating or egoistic element, arising from the wants of human nature and the privations of circumstances; Esteem, which is the moral and rational element, arising from the discrimination and judgment of the moral reason in respect to right, worth and goodness: Tenderness, which is the forth-going or altruistic element, arising by some relations of nearness to us in another being,—as the child's nearness to the mother, or the nearness of kindred spirits.

Now, it remains to ask, How stand these elements of love as related to God?

It is plain, first, that the element of desire must be put aside. God is Maker, Upholder of all things. Therefore nothing can be desired for him that he has not, nor is there aught that we could long for him to be that he is not. And we cannot desire to make him ours, since he is with us, our Father, at all times; nor can we desire impiously to call him all our own who is the Infinite Father of all creatures.

But again it is plain, secondly, that the element of tenderness must be put away. The relations of nearness to which tenderness responds imply always a certain equality, and often also nearness in place. There must be opportunity of presence and acquaintance, for the arising of tenderness toward any one. But God is the One, the Eternal, the Infinite, the Perfect. He fills all things. He is the life of the living and of the dead, the perfect Order, the all-infolding Spirit. He is, in truth, infinitely near, yet infinitely far also. And though we live and move in his being and are surrounded evermore by his presence, yet he is no nearer to any one than to another, and lives unseen, untouched, unheard save as each and all may see, touch and hear him in the prophetic recesses of the Spirit. Unto God, therefore, that tenderness cannot arise which depends on circumstances of special personal nearness. There is something even of irreverence and impiety, which all surely must feel, in professing unto God those same tender emotions which we pour forth on parent, brother, sister and friend.

The moral element, the element of esteem, therefore, is left alone. This toward God becomes veneration, aspiration, worship. This element not only goes out to the Infinite One, but only in the devotion unto him has its utmost attainment, and expression. It is reverence, awe, glorifying, trust. This to know and feel is to be moral and spiritual beings, children of God. It is pure religion. It is awe without fear, simple and pure.

Now, these reasonings lead us to see that love to God is not like human love, of friend to friend, comrade to comrade, or parental or filial; yet that rightly it is to be called love, because it is the utmost exaltation and power of that rational part, the moral element, the fine esteem and ethical reverence which lifts human love into its greatest glory and joy, Now, with this exaltation of moral judgment into a veneration, adoration,

aspiration, worship, which is love to God, go some other exercises of spirit which accompany human love also in all forms of it. These are Joy, Trust, and a constant living action of the Love.

Joy in love is very great. The greatest joy of it is in loving. "Depend upon it," says Sir Arthur Helps, "the most fatal idleness is that of the heart. And the man who feels weary of life may be sure that he does not love his fellow-creatures as he ought."

There is also a joy in being loved which waits on the other and greater joy like the bow-in-the-clouds on the sun and the rain. How precious and fair this makes human life! Nay, with what a pleasure we behold its exercise in our dumb fellow creatures! I know not that life can be conceived or is possible but by love. Certainly it were but a frozen zone where intelligence has hard struggle to live. But with love is light, conception, understanding, power to do anything, and a great joy. Now, this Joy goes likewise with love to God. The exaltation of the moral power of the soul into worship is a great joy. The perception of a holy perfectness, an Eternal Righteousness, Mercy, Justice, Providence, Peace, Beauty, and the uplifting of the soul to this sight of the soul with unspeakable worship is a love which is great joy.

Trust is another exercise of spirit which goes with human love and likewise with love to God. To have a pure and perfect trust in a friend—what a stay that is! What peace! What a source of the sense of power and strength! Such a trust attends love to God as what I have reasoned it to be,—attends with its utmost force and reason. When we have conceived and beheld what is of God,—Justice, Truth, Loving-kindness, Holiness, Peace, and all these Eternal, Infinite,—and unto this Perfect we look in adoration, worship, glory, here is a sea that will carry our Trust. We are full of the power of Trust. Then we cry, "He always wins who sides with God," "One with God is a majority," "Learn what God is like" and "Back with thine angel to the field and bravely do thy part"—"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Another exercise of our souls in our human loves is what I

have called the constant living action of the love. A true love is ever with us, like a waking guardian or a watchful administrator. Shall we do this act? What would our precious and revered friend say of it? Is this a good feeling, an honorable emotion? What if our beloved were looking on it? These reflections attend always a very high kind and joyful faculty of love in human life. This same constancy of presence and action attends love to God. For this love is worship, adoration and joy, with holy awe. In measure as thus we feel unto Eternal Holiness, all temporal evil will be rebuked. We can not know and have in us this love unto God without feeling constantly that, "however things may seem, no good thing is failure and no evil thing is success." Love to God is that worship and praise unto the goodness of God which arise in us always by their pure force, if ill things solicit us, to answer them, saying, "No, ye cannot live before *His* face, and therefore ye should be foreign to me."

One great joy and support there is in love to God which exists not in our human loves, namely, the immanent and unfailing presence of God. We may miss a human friend sorely. We may long for his presence unutterably when we can not have it. Perhaps sad conditions part us, or seas roll between, or death, so like to the sea, "which divides and yet unites mankind." Or if we may see our beloved sometimes, yet it may be rarely and for a period very short and flying swiftly to leave us again alone.

But never we can be lonely for God. Always he is Presence. If we sit on a hill and view the wide quiet of a landscape, he is Presence therein. "Would not all fade away altogether, were we left for one moment really alone in it?" If we look into the heavens at night where the stars call forth their hosts without number, God is with us therein, who inhabiteth Eternity and Infinity. If we go to our fellow men, there, in you, in me, in all, in the solemness of crowds, is the same Mystery, Life, Presence, Power, Peace, One in the Many, Infinity in the finite, Eternity in Time. "If we ascend into heaven, he is there; if we make our bed in the grave, behold he is there; if we take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, even there doth his hand lead us and his right hand doth hold us." Unto love to God never is lacking the Presence of the Lord. "In the secret of his tabernacle" we are, "in the secret

place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty."

Now, by these reflections it is plain that we cannot love God as we love each other. This never ought to be commanded or expected. Looking back at my own experience, I would counsel that it is unwise and wrong to urge children to love God. Unable to analyse and think, they will be only pained and confused, perhaps frightened and distressed, the conscience troubled and perplexed. Even perhaps the heart will be hardened and the sweet naturalness of religious unfolding distorted or destroyed. Let the mind be directed to divine beauty and filled with reverence for goodness. Then adoration, aspiration, worship, sense of the Infinite divine presence, peace and joy will follow naturally and fervently. Love of virtue, love of truth, love of beauty, love of love, is love of God, for these are his being. When they are beheld glorifying all the works of God, shining everywhere, and the divine, impending, encompassing Spirit is known, then follows adoration of Him, the source and being of us, the Father divine. And when, with single eye and pure devotion, all the power of the mind is devoted to the truth, and all the reverence of the soul rises unto the beautiful, and all the might of the moral judgment is in council for the right, and all the mercy and love of the heart pour forth to our fellow men,—then we love God, as we are commanded, with all the heart and all the soul and all the mind and all the strength. Then we know that this truly is "the first and great commandment."

FEAR OF GOD.

"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before him all the earth."—Psalm xcvi, 9.

This good text will show us the right meaning of the fear of God. For the two parts of the text, I think, must be used to explain each other. They make one Hebrew stanza, if so I may call the parallelism of two lines which is the Hebrew poetical form. Therefore they may be considered as two forms of the same thought, this being the nature commonly of the Hebrew parallelism. Thus to "fear before" the Lord is the same as to "worship in the beauty of holiness."*

Fear of God is set forth exceedingly as a chief teaching of religion. To fear him is to be religious and to be saved. Pulpits ring with the need of religious fear. Prayer-meetings are deprecatory—"O Lord have mercy upon us miserable offenders." But in all this teaching and in such-like prayer, the sad preachers and still sadder people (yet I know not whether it be worse to mislead, as the preachers do, and by custom of much speaking to feel little, or to be misled, as the people are, and by rarer recurrence to words to feel much) forsake this good text wherein the fear of God is made the same as to worship in the beauty of holiness.

Let us look together at some meanings of the word "fear."

First, to fear may mean to be afraid. An old Stoic has said, "No sane man is afraid of God." But religion has been a weary long time in coming to sanity. Nay, sanity, which means good health, soundness, seems the last and slow virtue acquired by men in any of life's business. Sanity or soundness

*Some prefer to translate "In holy beauty," which might have no different sense in truth. Others prefer "In holy array," or "In holy attire," or "In holy adornment." But I shall do no ill in hanging the thought of my sermon on the common translation.

means also roundness; I mean, good balance and the due strength of all parts in their measure and manner. For no man is sane or sound who has one part very strong and another very weak, a creature of bumps and hollows, a protuberance here, a depression there; but only one who is rounded out well and evenly and has a fair shape by the evenness and right size of all parts. As the body is not sound which has strong arms but shaking legs, or keen eyes but dull ears, or good lungs but a disordered heart, so no man is sane or sound in soul who is huge in thought and dwarfish in feeling, or the other way, or strong in imagination and weak in reason, or the other way; but only he is sound and sane, and sees things as they are, who is rounded well, and evenly brought forth in his different powers and in the many actions of the mind,—balanced and stable, if such a figure I may use, on the sharp and delicate wedge of life. And this roundness, as I have said, is the same as health, and health is the same as joy. To work healthily, to think healthily, to love healthily, is in very truth rapture; and is power to see things as they are, which is to know them in their eternity, which is to see them in God.

But this same health or roundness or soundness or sanity, whichever name we may please, seems to be the rarest thing in the world, and mankind has been a long time toiling unto it as a race; and religion has been a weary long time attaining to sanity. Therefore, though truly "no sane man is afraid of God," because, as the Stoic says again, "his power is to do good," and no power at all has he to do evil or any harm, because this would be to do contrary to what he is, to unmake himself and cease to be, "who inhabits eternity"—though this be true, yet, so little sanity is there, men on all hands are afraid of God; are fearing God after this manner, of being afraid. When the Jews in the desert made a calf of molten gold, Moses said that he fell down before the Lord for them forty days and forty nights, "For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you." This sad and bad thing, to be sure, is found in the history of barbarians, whose image or thought of God was of a great king called Yahweh, who was raging with jealous fury and wounded pride in some palace of the sky, because the people took away their homage

from him and made over their attentions to a golden calf. What matter? Is it not *in the Bible* in many places that God was angry and smote the people? He still is "wroth with anger and hot displeasure," say the pulpits. He is "angry with the wicked every day." He "is a consuming fire." He "is a jealous God." "Who can stand before him" when he is angry? Oh! how did these texts, and many such, plague my tender childhood! And other children they are plaguing now. All around us the pulpits are full of these texts, not bursting and leaking at every chink with them, as once they were, but still full, crying out that we must fear God, meaning that we must be afraid of being found in the multitude taken in wrath who shall be trampled down into his wrath and "hot displeasure." And to take good care or wise means to escape the wrath is called religion. No doubt they who say these things and preach fear in this sense, are very conscientious in it. I mean, they feel constrained to do so; for surely it is a thing which has few attractions. But they are not sane; they are not in right mind; they are misshapen in some manner, not sound and round in mental and moral parts; and being not sane, they are afraid of God. This insanity is so old and has prevailed so long (for philosophers say, and we can make little doubt of it, that religion begins in fear and comes sooner to terror than to gratitude) that it has great prescription and a strong hold. For it is fringed with teachings like a rime of ages, and has every creed to speak for it, and sprang from the first pathetic gropings of the uninstructed religious nature.*

*I subjoin, for my liking of it, the following eloquence of Sir Thomas Browne in "Religio Medici": "I thank God, and with joy I mention it, I was never afraid of hell, nor ever grew pale at the description of that place. I have so fixed my contemplations on heaven, that I have always forgot the idea of hell; and am afraid rather to lose the joys of the one, than endure the misery of the other; to be deprived of them is a perfect hell, and needs, methinks, no additions to complete our afflictions. That terrible term hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof. I fear God, yet am not afraid of him; his mercies make me afraid of my sins, before his judgments afraid thereof; these are the forced and secondary methods of his wisdom, which he useth but as the last remedy, and upon provocation,—a course rather to deter the wicked than to excite the virtuous to his worship. I can hardly think there was ever any scared into heaven; they go the fairest way to heaven that would serve God without a hell; other mercenaries, that crouch unto him in fear of hell, though they term themselves the servants, are indeed but the slaves of the Almighty." *Religio Medici*, I. LII. Yet though this eloquence and manliness and piety is good, must I not call it but a half piety or a piety half told? For if "his mercies make ashamed of sins," then what need of

But if, then, it be so bad a thing and so far from piety to be afraid of God and to think of him as "wroth against us with anger and hot displeasure," shall we cease to use the word "fear" as toward God? Will the words "fear of God" be then meaningless, or else ill-meaning? No, for the word "fear" has another precise and accepted sense; and it is the lot of many words to have sundry meanings, and is no objection to them; for as states of mind shade by fine degrees into each other, so must one word cover many delicate differences in degree or kind; and if even covering diverse kinds of things or ideas, this need not work confusion. Such a word is "fear." Not only it means the being afraid, but also it expresses an exalted exercise of soul in reverence and awe. To fear God is to look forth on creation with awe; still more, to look into ourselves, the moral order, with awe. This meaning of fear is spoken in the first word of the text, the parallel to the saying, "Fear before him." The parallel is, "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." "Worship" is one meaning of "fear." It is awe, adoration, the "walking humbly with God," yet with a great exaltation of spirit, like the poet, who searching and gazing into the sky cried, The "undevout astronomer is mad." To be afraid is the meaning of "fear" when we are thinking of ourselves; it is the feeling we have toward some power on account of an actual or possible disposition, affection or action of the power toward ourselves. When we forget ourselves and think not of any interests or desires of us, and are not busy with hopes and anxieties about what shall fall to us, with wishes to avoid one thing or to obtain

a heaven to entice more than of a hell to deter? And why is not the true heaven to be sought in the mind which thus by love is lifted above sin? And if to "crouch in fear of hell" be bad, is the crouching in desire of reward any better? Therefore the good Sir Thomas, though he has come to the sanity of not being afraid, has not expressed herein the full roundness of not desiring, but of adoring and aspiring and lifting up the spirit for simple love and worship. With a like halt were the words of the Chaplain Roloff to the first Frederick William of Prussia at his death. Roloff dealt very roundly with the monarch (see Hagenbach's "German Rationalism," Chap, iii.), and said to him, "If your Majesty were to be saved by a miracle, of which, however, we have no reason for expectation, you would not enjoy heaven in the condition of mind in which you now are. Your army, your treasures, your lands, must remain here—no courtiers can follow you there, no servants on whom you can wreak your anger. In heaven a man must have a heavenly mind." "Those were words worthy of a Nathan," Yes; but go a step further, Herr Hagenbach, and say the truth, that a heavenly mind *is* heaven, which hath naught to do with time or place, and "hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to lighten it," and "there is no night in it!"

another thing, then the "fear" which was the being afraid, because we were full of ourselves, becomes awe and reverence and adoration, because we are thinking purely of God.

A poet has put in a peaceful stanza an expression of the "fear" which is awe, far away from terror. "What should I do," says the poet, "if I were told that I must die to-morrow?" And answers:

> "I might not sleep for awe; but peaceful, tender,
> My soul would lie
> All the night long; and when the morning splendor
> Flushed o'er the sky,
> I think that I could smile—could calmly say,
> 'It is his day.'"

"I might not sleep for awe"; which is to say, for the fear of God, but not for terror, not for the being affrighted of him. Fear of God is

> "The instinct that can tell
> That God is on the field, when he
> Is most invisible";

it is to

> "lose not heart,
> But learn what God is like;"

it is to

> "See aloft the red right Arm
> Straight redress the eternal scales;"

it is to look on our lot with a reverence, as being our part in the work and Providence of God, wherein we are

> "Content to fill a little space
> If he be glorified;"

it is to think of God in our joys, and to extinguish menial troubles in the thought of him, and if we have pure great sorrows, to trust and love in them; it is to conceive that "in him we live and move and have our being," and "of him and through him and in him are all things;" it is to feel forth unto him

> "Who is within a quickening Flame,
> A Presence round about;"

it is to think of "the Eternal Years;" it is to dwell in the light of the mystery of living, of coming to life, of death, and the Eternal Years; it is to enter into infinite space, where are "all the stars in company," and "the generations of the earth," and the awful OUGHT that "comes like wind and burns like flame," and to fall

down, and yet again look up, in adoration, and cry, Still, "there is more than this;" and yet again it is to behold all this glory of earth and sky and waters under them, of suns and stars and radiance, as no more than the perishable, the changeable and transitory, before One "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away and there was found no place for them;"—awe, holy wonder, piety, devoutness, the sense of the heavens and earth as a sanctuary, adoration, humility, exaltation, faith, glory, all sublimity, and solemn thoughts, this is fear of God.

To fear God has yet another meaning, which also is in the text, in the parallel to the words "Fear before him;" for says the first line of the parallelism, "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." To keep unto the beauty of holiness thus is made the parallel of fearing God and the same thing as to fear him. And to cleave with love and trust unto holiness as a beauty and light, is the same as to turn from evil, condemning and fearing it. Therefore, to fear wrong is to fear God. But to fear to do wrong because it is dangerous, because it may heap punishments or sufferings on us, because Almightiness may afflict us with his judgments, this is not to fear God in this noble and true sense of the text, but to be afraid of him; not to fear him, but to be affrighted at the things he may do to us if we be offenders. But to fear wrong because it is an abasement of the image of Light and Holiness in us, because it is to abuse what is sacred, because it is to work shame and reproach under the holy heavens, because it is to put to desecration the law which is the nature and being of God in all things and in our own hearts, because evil by its very essence is an enemy of our souls, because it is ruin, hatefulness, darkness, the foe of all nature, of love, of understanding and of joy, the fear of evil-doing because it spoils us of power to see things as they are, to have true knowledge, to live in council with nature, to hear the voices of all sounds and read the scriptures of all lights, which is nothing else but to see God with our eyes and hear him with our ears and know him in his Presence,—*thus* and for these reasons to fear wrong, is to fear God. To fear to do wrong, not for the penalty of it, but for the evil itself, the spirit-hurt, because what is ill is disfigurement, tarnish, taint, wane, debasement, waste and rust, unnatural, a self-shame, a condemnation even if there were no court or law

in Heaven and no punishment in the Universe—to fear wrong *thus* is the fear of God.

There is a manner and kind of fearing wrong which is like being afraid of God; only that, instead of being affrighted at the punishments which the Almighty Judge will inflict, we then are terrified away from evil by the consequences which it drags after it, such as disease, pain, decrepitude, or the penalties which men annex to the wrong, such as loss of reputation and of friends, dishonor, prisons. Such a manner of terror may be possible, plainly, to one who "has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" But it is no better than being afraid of God, neither more virtuous, nor more nor less religious. For whether we be frightened off by imagining what an angry Deity will do to us or by what the laws of nature or of men will inflict, it is but a calculation of consequences to us, an argument about advantages, which neither is real love of right nor real fear of wrong. Dread of penalties is a wretched motive of conduct, neither religious nor virtuous, nor creative of noble life; for both religion and virtue require self-forgetfulness.

Now, this is the account I would give of fearing God, namely, that "no sane man can be afraid of God," but that fear of him has a true and high sense touching the heart, meaning awe and reverence, and also another true and high sense touching the moral nature, meaning a pure shrinking from evil because it is against the being and truth of God, because it is that darkness which comprehends not the Light when the Light enters into the world, because wrong is a fearful going away from God.

In conclusion, I would that I might express that peace and sense of safety which belong to our spirits, contrary to that being afraid of the Father which has flourished sadly and long and tormented many tender souls ill-taught. A sense of safety as vast as heaven and earth, and like the being taken up into "everlasting arms," may fill and feed the soul. It will rise to unutterable joy, gratefulness, communion, in rare moments when the spirit is lifted up, when we come up out of the waters of daily life baptised into truthfulness, pure love, knowledge, peace; and the heavens open to us, and we hear a voice, which owns us children of God.

I feel very safe, all safe. "He shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul." Here is another parallelism, or Hebrew stanza of verse, wherein the two lines mean the same thing. He shall preserve thy soul, and *therein* preserve thee from all evil. What if, in ways we understand not yet, nor can fathom, our bodies be hurt or overwhelmed, or our possessions crumbled or shaken to pieces or burned? Still "it shall not come nigh *thee*," for *thou art a soul*, which is "preserved." Therefore I can take what comes to me; either in joy or in a waiting peace I can take it; and naught really evil can happen to me save my own wrong-doing. If then I do wrong, I would not abate any punishment thereof, nor escape for an instant from the blessed disciplinary order of all things. I am all safe, surrounded, encamped about. The world was made for the worm, the sparrow and me. What time can I remember in the past when either I was deserted or ill-treated? What time, therefore, can I be afraid of in the future? For what comes to me in the holy order I would not turn from, nor revile it; and if sorrow come, I would not turn from it lest I turn from God; and some time, nay often by the wayside, I shall have joy unto the very full of my soul.

This sense of safety is a perfect willingness of spirit unto all that is in Providence and belongs in the Order of God. With this willingness goes a confidence, a *sense of being at home*, which is supreme and ineffable. Yet I may try to express it by figure or comparison. Into what manner of safety do I enter? I feel as safe and immovable as the solid earth,—as the Psalmist says, "Like Mount Zion which cannot be moved," and "the mountains around about Jerusalem;" and again, "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved." And how safe is the earth, that it shall accomplish its being and end? The earth is as safe as the eternal stars that stretch through the heavens, of which it is one star. And how safe are the stars? As safe as all the universe of worlds on worlds whose light never reaches us from the eternity of the distance of their stations, which "hath no end, yea! also, and no beginning." And how safe is all the universe? As safe as God, whose Light, whose Life, whose Visibleness, it is. Safe am I, therefore, with the safety of God; for I am of the earth, which is of the firmament of stars,

which is of the Universe of things, which is of God. With joy and wonder I lay me down to sleep; with wonder and joy I awake. With wonder and joy also I will die; and with joy—what then? Who knoweth? But to the unknown event, because it is of the One, the Eternal, of whom the known is a shade on my right hand, I say, "Come thou! Welcome! Come in—with joy!"

"Be still and know that he is God." "He stilleth the noise of the seas and the roaring of their waves, and the tumult of the people!"

IMMORTAL LIFE.

This life hath a future life, say we? Nay, rather, all life *is* immortal life; for what we mean by life is that we have left death, have come forth from not-being; why then return to not-being? *We*, or *I*, means personal continuance from experience to experience, whereby I, who had experience yesterday, having striven, loved, lost, won, sought, labored, joyed, grieved yesterday, link these things to the like or to other things to-day. Now this person, this WE, this I, this continuance from experience to experience, this link between yesterday and to-day, this reflection over from one experience to the next like it, this is what has come forth from not-being; and why should it return to not-being? Why should this *person* in us, this quality to span moments, times, events, and join one to another, this which we name life, or thought, or consciousness, or what you will,—the names are legion—why should this, having appeared, then disappear? Why, having come forth, being brought to pass in the divine suscitation, and having gotten a name, or named itself, We, I, Me, Life, Soul, Spirit, Thought, Knowledge, Memory, Person, why should this be brought then not to pass and not to be? *Why* should it? Who can give a reason? Who can give a guess that it is so, better than my guess that it is not so? Whose feeling that he will perish is worth any more than my defiance of perishing? Whose lack of will to live is worth any more than my scorn of the thought of dying? Who can give a reason for dying more than I for not dying? I can give no reason for continuing, say you?

But here I am! Try you to give a reason for my ceasing, or for my believing that I shall cease. Vain! While my ears are filled with the harmonies of life, will you persuade me there is but silence? Away! Dance, if you must, to no tune, no sound, a dumb show of an instrument, all keys but no pipes; leave me to my music and my march! I will not argue with you. I will not cut up logic with you. I will not probe the body with you, trepan, dissect, anatomize. I have no time. I am too happy. Joy is like a race—I must run it. No one who runs will ask what a race is. I remember now a fable of a fish who hearing some men on the shore speak of water, straightway swam everywhither in search of the water and spent his miserable days in besetting his neighbors with entreaties to know where he might find what he was swimming in.

"All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,
And to die is different, from what any one supposed and luckier."

* * *

"What is a man anyhow? What am I? What are you"?

* * *

"I know I am deathless;
I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's compass;
I know I shall not pass like a child's carlacue cut with a burnt stick, at night."

* * *

"I swear I think now that everything without exception has an eternal soul!
The trees have, rooted in the ground! The weeds of the sea have! the animals have!
"I swear I think there is nothing but immortality!
That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the nebulous float is for it and the cohering is for it!
And all preparation is for it—and identity is for it—and life and materials are altogether for it!"

This being the ecstacy of life, now I will give in this discourse four points and two inferences, thoughts of life, not after the manner of the fish, but after what his manner might be if, having found that it was the water which was the vehicle of his search for water, he fell to praising and singing and joyfully celebrating the sea and the being a fish, the water and his own fins.

First then I will state this thought, namely, that this living place, the earth I mean, and this manner of life, and our going forth and being in it daily, all this which we collect and signify when we utter the words "this life,"—all this, I say, is but incidents of life. It is not life, but events of life. If, not saying "this life," but "this event of life," we spoke thus of

this dwelling-place, and of these conditions in which we are, I know not but this habit of speech, long continued, would have lifted us into wide light and joy out of many shallow cisterns of darkness and doubts. Life is vast; it has habitations and conditions and events without number. This earth is one habitation. We are with life and in life and life in us. That we are on this earth is one event of the life of us, which hath all events in it. That we have this wondrous body here, is another event of it. That by this body we busy ourselves with the earth and its materials, is another event of life. That we have childhood, youth, mid-life, age, and pass on from one of these stages to another, is a compound event of life, made of many events. That this body hath a further transaction beyond growing old, namely, that it dies and dissolves, is another event of life. "Man dies alive—think of that!" exclaims a poet. All these are but incidents, events; they happen in life and are of life; but they are not life, nor bound it, nor give account of it nor describe it.

Secondly, let this thought have place, namely, that if this earth as our lodging, and if our coming to it and our stay in it and all passing along the way, if this be but an event or a befalling in *life*, how momentous and great it is! For herein the stress of the mind is to be laid on life. The great matter is, not that this course of things, this earthly journey, is an event, but that it is an event in LIFE. In the first thought I laid emphasis on event—that this life on the earth, with its birth and death, is not the whole of life, but an *event* in life; but now I would turn about and lay the strain of all my force, for my own joy, (and for joy of others, if so much I may be blessed), on *life*—that all this earthly march and experience is an event in LIFE. Then how grand and important this present life looks, because it is an event, which means a coming forth, in LIFE, in the Everlasting, the Infinite, the Holy, which is Life! And being an event in LIFE, what has it to do with death? What says it about death? Being an event in LIFE, shall it bring up in death and become an event in death? Who says this? Who has reason for it? Who can show a hint of it anywhere? Nay, ye men of science, I have not "dissected the nerves of a black beetle," nor counted the lenses of an insect's eye, nor turned a hydra inside out, nor burned

up water, nor computed a comet, nor discovered a planet by the shaking of another, nor made cures by drugs, but I know all your science as well as you know it.

"Hurrah for positive science! long live exact demonstration!
Fetch stonecrop mixt with cedar and branches of lilac!
This is the lexicographer, this the chemist, this made a grammar of the old cartouches.
These mariners put the ship through dangerous seas,
This the geologist, this works with the scalpel, and this is a mathematician.

"Gentlemen, to you the first honors always!
Your facts are useful, and yet they are not my dwelling;
I but enter by them to an area of my dwelling."

All these things are but events in LIFE, which is my dwelling, and I am in it and its nature is in me. Shall life have no more event when this event passes? Shall it have no more event for me who have known this event? Nay, my knowing of this event and the *me* which is knowing of it, this is the event of all events in LIFE. Shall life drop this event? Who can say that life drops any event of it? Change is not a dropping of an event; it is but the fastening it to another. Wherefore, because this life of mine is an *event* in LIFE, I belong to LIFE. I feel deathless. And I feel how vast and glorious this present time and this present journey is, being an event in LIFE.

For the third thought, it is this, that if this present life be but an event or incident in life, and to be regarded grandly because it is an event in LIFE, and yet in a second and less important way because it is but an *event* in life, then surely how little ought we to be immersed in the events of the event, the mere incidents of the incident. Whether we be rich or poor, or high or low, fortunate, struggling, hungry sometimes or always full, observed or passed by, honored or unhonored, what of this? What are these things? I deny not that we must live and work among them. I say not that they are *nothings*. Rather would I say that even any incident of an incident in LIFE has its place or its import. Happiness, good cheer, good health, good wealth, righteous honors, these by no means are naught. We shall do well to desire them temperately and to take the means for them by the way; and besides, they train us to a very wholesome activity; and not alone for ourselves but for others, since our due and comely honors may give great pleasure and a lively record of joy to them who love us. With Paul I would say, "Covet

earnestly the best gifts." Yet with him I would add, "And yet I show unto you a still more excellent way"; which is to desire these things, these honors and riches and outward preferments, and to find a good taste in them and to like them well, yet to set them in a second place or in a small place; to reckon them something and to be sought, yet to reckon them little and to be sought not very much, but only so much as may exercise well the powers of us that engage with such things—to exercise us well, yet to leave full force and wide time for the better riches and spiritual deservings and fine understanding; and especially not to be disquieted, if, having sought these things well and manfully, we lack them, but to be able to lack them as well and manfully as we cast about for them. For it is certain that every one who will may have the first and best things; therefore how sure it is that every one may be able to lack in a manful and gentle manner the second and third things, or the things even of less rate than second or third, very like toys which having thought of as a child we have put away when we have become spiritual man.

To learn of what moment things really are, it is a secret to look back on them when they are long enough past. If one thing be a little way off, behind or before, and another very close upon us, the thing that is close will seem, very like, to be greater than truly it is, because it will engage all our eyes and perhaps cover all the other things with its looming. But when they become all a great distance away, the little distance between them, which made so huge a difference when they were near, has disappeared, and we see the things in due proportion and in their relative importance, as they are. Who has not experienced how little, when they are far past, seem the things which were great interests, agitations, cares, fears, worries, perplexities, heats, bitternesses, when we were walking among them. When we have traveled on and left them, we come to a hill-top afar, from which behind appear all these things in little feature, bits of a wide, cool landscape, covered with evening and dew and stars, while we bivouack for a night on the crest. This will help us to judge better of them and give them no more than their place while they have the importance of being with us and passing by.

This effect of time, the looming of things more than their value because they are near, has been mentioned well by Cardinal Newman, with the explanation well stated, to-wit, that it is just because the present things are mixed up with our souls that they seem so great; whence easily it is seen that we should use the advantage of the distant view to learn not to let our souls be confused too much with things just because they are present. In the book of Genesis (XLVII) it is told that when Joseph was advanced highly in Egypt, Jacob and all his other sons came from Canaan, which was famine-smitten, to seek a dwelling in Goshen, and on being brought to the king, Jacob was asked by the king how old he was, and the patriarch answered, "Few and evil have been the years of my life." Yet he was then, as he says, a hundred and thirty years old. Commenting thereon, Cardinal Newman says, "Had Jacob lived to Methuselah's age, he would have called it short. This is what we all feel, though at first sight it seems a contradiction, that even though the days as they go be slow, and be laden with many events, or with sorrows, or dreariness, lengthening them out and making them tedious, yet the year passes quick though the hours tarry, and time bygone is as a dream, though we thought it would never go while it was going. And the reason seems to be this: that when we contemplate human life in itself, in however small a portion of it, we see implied in it the presence of a soul, the energy of a spiritual existence, of an accountable being; consciousness tells us this concerning it every moment. But when we look back on it in memory, we view it but externally, as a mere lapse of time, as a mere earthly history. And the longest duration of this external world is as dust, and weighs nothing against one moment's life of the world within."

If, now, such be the effect of viewing things distantly, and many things appear too great to us when close by, from the very fact of the mingling of the human soul with them, how much it is to be wished, and how important it is, that we should learn to mingle our souls with them only duly, and to know them in their true values, as they are revealed when seen afar off in their place in a wide view of many things. For though these things of which I speak, the outward things of the world, to be rich or poor, high-placed or humbly-placed, at ease or much-striving,

though these be the smaller matters of life, yet it is a very great matter how we deal with them, and what concern our souls make with them. If being the smaller things, we make very much of them and advance them to be great things, then the smaller the thing is which we put in a great place the worse it is for us, and the more the soul is blinded and unable to see the immortal life. For if in our lives we put first things first, and the things which are of value we bring into the highest place in our thoughts, this is the same as to know life, what it is, and that it must go on, and what death is, that it is but an event in life, and a change by which life proceeds, and touches not that life whose nature is shown by the nature of the things which are first and greatest in it. To know what things are first in any thing is to know that thing well. He is a musician who knows well and feels most the things which are first and best in music, such as true tune and harmony, refined melody, thought, expressiveness, and the like, but not tricks of fingers and nimble caracoles over keys. So he that knows truly what things are first in life and attends to these things, which are temperance, truthfulness, lovingness, faithfulness, reverence, thought,—he knows life and hath experience of it, and will be the one soonest to get true report of the nature of life and of his own nature, and that the two agree and leave no death in view for him.

Also, if we look at things truly in their different values as we pass them on our way, and see rightly which are the greater and which the smaller, and treat them so, then the past will look the same to us as now the present does. The distant harmony and proportions will be like those we perceive now. We shall not have the shame by and by, and the ignorance now, of finding things dwindle in the distance and appear trifling in the past which we made all-important while they were with us, being disturbed by them and whirled about by them. But past and present will be a unity, and the same moral judgments rise in both, and the same things seem great in both, and therefore no insignificance anywhere. Life will be one stream, not interrupted. To perceive the past and present as one in moral import, and one stream of life, is the same as to look forward confidently, with no sense of interruption. If the past of us survive and seem great, not trifling, the future will appear to us in the

same manner, and we shall live in life and be filled with immortality. This Wordsworth meant by his lines—

> "I would wish my days to be
> Bound each to each by natural piety";

for then life is all one, and the future is bound to us as much as the past is. And the like says Coleridge, taking the lines of Wordsworth therewith into his page, that it is contempt of the past, arising if we have misplaced things in the present, which cuts away joy and faith in the future from men. "*They exist in fragments*," says he: "Annihilated as to the past, they are dead to the future, or seek for the proofs of it everywhere, only not (where alone it can be found) in themselves." But whoso puts first in his days and in his desire the things that truly are first, not vexed with small heats nor burned with envies, nor flying after low things as if they were high things, he will see the past shine like the present, and the things which seem great now, will seem great when he looks back on his past, and all will be of one voice and beauty; and unbroken life will cause the future to shine forward to us in like manner.

So far I have had three points:—1. That this earthly living place and our existence here is but an *event in life*: 2. That if this be so, we must consider how great and momentous *this* life is, because it is an incident in life, and life goes on unto everlastingness: 3. That the outward cares and interests of this life, as whether we be rich or poor, and so on, are but incidents of the incident, and in themselves are naught or little, but that it is a great matter in what way we take them and deal with them. Now, I come to another point, the fourth, namely, that this living-place, the earth, and our present life on it, have two special interests and glories. The first of these is a mental and moral glory of mystery. Some persons cannot conceive of living after the body dies. There is no way of imagining it, say they. It is too wonderful, inconceivable, mysterious. It can not be grasped. We have no manner of thinking of it. It is too astonishing. Now when I hear any say so, I can but wonder whether they find anything wonderful in this life; and if they do, then why find aught to stumble at in the idea of another life, or the continuity of life, because it is astonishing and the way of it

unimaginable? For myself, I seem like one shut in an ark, with a window toward the East and another toward the West. And having looked out of the Eastward window, till I am astonished with the things I see, the marvels of the heavens and the earth, and such an expanse, so that I am struck dumb with marveling, when at last I have become a little used to it, I turn me to look through the West window, saying, grown quiet, "Well I will look forth on the opposite side, and I expect as many great marvels as I have seen in the East, and even if there be more, and they be doubled or quintillioned, I shall not be surprised; after what I have seen, nothing can astonish me very much. So in this life I am filled so with wonder at my being, at all that belongs to me and goes on in me, at earth and sky, at other persons, at living creatures, from plants to men, insects, fishes, birds, monkeys, domestic creatures, wild creatures, at the unliving things (as they seem to us) from a sand-grain or a mist-vesicle to a planet and sun, at all organs, eyes, ears, hands, at the mysteries which make one a man and another a woman "and the feeling they have for each other", at little children and their manner of growing and the wonder of their changes till they become old, at crystals and songs and music and poetry, at sciences and reasoning and mathematics, with these and my life I am so wonder-filled that one of the greatest wonders to me is that any one can be so little expectant as I find some persons are. For myself, after all these wonders I reckon on the most immense and unimaginable things, to which we yet are as unopened as a babe is to these present marvels; but they belong to us, and await us, as these the babe. Such vast things as here there are, could not come from any source which had an end or limit of them. I expect mightily. I reckon without end. "What is a man, anyhow? What am I? What are you?" What is the soul? "We do not know what it is," say Cardinal Newman, in an eloquent exposition of the "Mysteriousness of our Present Being;" "it cannot be reached by any of the senses; we cannot see it or touch it. It has nothing in common with extension or form. To ask what shape the soul is would be as absurd as to ask what is the shape of a thought, or a wish, or a regret, or a hope. * * * * And what is it that unites soul and body? how do they touch? how do they keep together?

how is it that we do not wander to the stars, or to the depths of the sea, or to and fro as chance may carry us, while our body remains as it was on the earth? So far from its being wonderful that the body one day dies, how is it that it is made to live and move at all? how is it that it keeps from dying a single hour?" That I live at all is the one mystery and marvel on which I fall and stagger back, or lie on it trembling. After that, all is easy to think of, to dream of, to await; nothing is astonishing or difficult.

The second special interest and glory touching our life here, is the moral splendor and moment of it. The moral is the unapproachable sublimity. No matter what grandeur we be looking at, whether it be the utmost that mountains or the sea or the stars can show to us, let but a moral deed come to light there, a bit of supreme truthfulness or faithfulness or self-sacrifice, and instantly it holds all the majesty. All ranges, peaks, craters, waters, fires and suns pale in its presence. If one give a cup of water while his lips are cracking, or offer a kiss for a blow manfully, or leave not an "ass o'erladen" or "dog in the strada hard beset", let it be in presence of what conjunction of mighty things you will, suns and planets and moons, "height or depth, or any other creature", the deed has a face like God, from which "the earth and heavens flee away, and there is found no place for them." This moral capacity puts to shame all of earth's opportunities. There is not room here for the expansion to its full of a deed of self-sacrifice, or a soul of love and peace. What end is there to such a thing? What can limit a moral singleness? What shore hath that voyage? What room for it by land or sea? "Men there are", says the Cardinal before quoted, in a discourse of "The Greatness and Littleness of Human Life"—"Men there are, who in a single moment of their lives have shown a superhuman height and majesty of mind which it would take ages for them to employ on its proper objects, and, as it were, to exhaust; and who by such passing flashes, like rays of the sun and the darting of lightning, give token of their immortality. * * * Yet they are suddenly taken away, and we have hardly recognized them when we lose them. * * * There is something in moral truth and goodness, in firmness, in heavenly-mindedness, in meekness, in courage, in lovingkindness, to which this

world's circumstances are quite unequal, for which the longest life is insufficient, which makes the highest opportunities of this world disappointing, which must burst the prison of this world to have its appropriate range". By these thoughts and such experience the moral nature witnesses to immortality. There is a vastness and might in self-sacrifice, in devotion, which shows what death is, and looks through it and beyond. Self-sacrifice has room and possibility because dying is not destruction, and destruction is impossible. If one "give his body to be burned" for love, is the end of the body the end of the giving of it, and of him who gave it?,, These", cried Bartol, over some dead soldiers, "these are my witnesses of immortality. Think you the bullet came commissioned to let into nothingness the soul it could not daunt?" There is contradiction in the thought. Courage and calm self-devotion put death in its true place, and show what it is, that it is but an event in the process of life. And there is something in simple virtue and unselfishness so very grand and so infinite in what it may become and do, that this earth and its years have no equality or correspondence with it. It is the voice of God, saying, "Think not this small place is all; but for this my voice telling thee thou mightest think it all, for indeed it is great and holds things very great to thine eyes. But be informed. There is more, and this is but a little part."

So far now, to make here another review, I have said that this living-place and the days of our life in it make but one incident in life, not an ending, but one event: that because it is a befalling in Life, it is very momentous and holy; that the differences of our fortunes here are but incidents of the incident, and small matters in themselves, but yet it is a great matter how we take them; that our living here is such a mystery and glory that after it naught need astonish us and all things are possible; and that the moral moment of a man's life here is so great that we can conceive no scope for it but in everlastingness.

From these thoughts I draw two simple inferences:

The first is that simple Natural Religion has naught to fear in death. It needs no reconcilement with death. I hear much in these days of the reconcilement of religion with knowledge. We must reconcile religion with this philosophy, say some wise men; or, How shall religion agree with that science? say others;

or, We must make space for religion in this new discovery,—and how shall it be joined therewith? say others. Now they who say so are learned men and know all the things of which they speak, the philosophies and sciences and discoveries; but it is a question whether they know truly what religion is also. Mayhap they have not attended so well to that. To me it seems very like that religion is that which reconciles all things to each other and brings them to one; and that to speak of reconciling religion to a new thought is as if one should say that all things together must come to be reconciled to that new-comer, whereas it is that one thing which must make its way to unity with all things. Mayhap one who knows what religion is, if it have made a habitation in him, will not find the need of reconciling it with aught, for it never was out with anything, but is what shows all the many in One. But of this I will venture no more now (for it is a path with many windings and through some thickets which must be parted) than to say that simple religion has no need to be reconciled with death. Never it was estranged from death. It takes death as a pure habitude and a simple event in the process of living. Religion has no fear of death, nor any manner of fear, because religion is love, and with love is no room for fear. How can one fear anything who loves all things as they are and loves to have them so? And religion dwells in such a mystery of life, and so is glorified in the life, that presently it knows no end of the deeps of moral life, and insists, like the poet that "man dies alive," and having done the feat of dying, he is not less alive, but the more, by measure of another event in life achieved.

The second thing which I conclude from all these thoughts is that "one soul is as precious as another". This is not my own good thought. A woman said to me one day, with a very earnest look, "One soul is as precious as another"; and instantly I knew that it was so.

> "In all people I see myself, none more, and not one a barley-corn less,
> And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them".

In the journey of this life and in the last event of it all are mates. Some falter in one place, some in another, some walk grandly in one portion, some in another; but none go without

staggering in some place and none fail to walk grandly in some portion. Through it all, and in front of the last event of it, "one soul is as precious as another". None is offered any more life than another. What is missed at one place and time is not lost. There are other places, and more time. If we be chained or set in a walled place here, and we see many things which we know it is good to do or to have, courage! This period is not all. There is time enough to do everything. There is everlasting time in which to take what belongs to us. No one can feel he is more beloved than another, nor less beloved; for enough time is the great gift which carries all others with it; and this is given to all, and to none more than to another. Wherefore all are the same in the love of the Giver of Time, the Father Eternal. Not one thing which another may not have would I wish, for it is impious to wish to be more precious and more blest than another; and nothing which another has is denied to me, nor aught of mine is denied to another, for we have time to come to them all. O what blessedness in such knowledge! What fine joy in such thoughts! What beauty of the face of life in them! I perceive the meaning of the Psalmist, "Behold the *beauty* of the Lord and inquire in his temple"—"Strength and *beauty* are in his sanctuary".

NATURAL RELIGION.

"One God and Father of all, who is over all and through and in all." —Eph. iv. 6.

These words of the apostle will give me at the outset a three-fold thought from which to take account of Natural Religion. But before I end the sermon I shall come to another three-fold report of this Religion by an elder prophet.

Natural Religion is that which dwells in all houses of faith, in all companies or temples or adorations of whatever name, or whether there be no name at all. And he who dwells with Natural Religion must be ready to be at home anywhere and find nature's face in every habitation. For myself, I hope I am so; and I hope it is for my soul's good health that I should be, howsoever with mortal weakness and littleness of mind I may fall short of it. If I were brought into being in mid space, on no earth, with no history, naught in my soul of men's device or statement, but only the thought of God, and then were dropped on this earth in this maze of histories, creeds, religions, forms, worships, I know not how I could feel more at home with all, less averse to any, than now I do, if they be sincere. I have no name which labels or prescribes me. There are few assemblies or thoughts so little human but I can pick out some greatness to feed on and some habitude which is fellow to mine; and none so grand in humanity (which is in divinity too) but I can aspire and strive up unto it with understanding and joy.

Therefore habit me in any name you will, I know none but fits some bend in me. Will you call me Jew? I will accept it. To me Moses is colossal. I glory in the prophets. I am under amazement with all that history. I am astonished with the sufferings, fortitude, devotion, sincerity, sublimity, religion of the race. I sing the psalms. Nor is there any anthem or cry of religion in the ages that moves me so like the sound of an

archangel's trumpet as the Hebrew watch-cry, "Hear, O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One." Will you call me Christian? I shall not deny it. I was born in that household. It were strange if in the house of my heritage I could find no pictures and nothing fine. I am astonished and glorified in Jesus. I have joy in the wonderful parables of him, and in the mountain sermon, and in his love of the fields and flowers and gentle creatures, in his defiance and courage, in his appeal to his own soul, in his dealing with children, with the women who revered him, with the outcast, the despised, the sinful, with the great and with the lowly, and before Pilate and on the cross. Paul is an amazing fiery greatness to me. All the gospel and Paul's letters are very great. The rush of a pure charity and of enthusiasm of humanity into the Roman world with the first Christians, the rise of hospitals and brotherhoods of mercy and angelic sisters, many great saints and martyrs and brave protesters, all these magnify the Lord. I am of them and established by them; I am fed with the glory of them; I will not leave them. I like the name of them, be it Christian. Or will you call me Unitarian? It is welcome. The name is honorable. It has a brave history, and therefore is honorable in itself. It is unpopular, and even much hated by those who know not what it means, and therefore raises the more honor in bearing it. I have joy in its unity of worship; I find reason and fervor in its looking unto ONE the ETERNAL ONE, neither two nor three, but ONE alone. I am rejoiced by its love of human nature and declaration of the dignity and worth of every soul, and the preciousness of every one soul, equal to any other. I am blessed with its wide fellowship, founded in the spirit and not in the letter, in the heart and not in creed, whereby it welcomes all, and excludes not any, and examines no one's creed who assumes the name, but leaves to each soul to say what name best suits it. For thus I see and conclude of Unitarianism, namely, that if a line be drawn around all things which call themselves by that name, at least in this country of ours, that line will include more differences of opinion, and more extreme differences, living together in love and peace, seeking truth thoughtfully, speaking thought truthfully and crowning every one with a like freedom of the spirit, than any other line that

can be circumscribed. And this is very noble and cheering, truth revealing. I am at home in it. I am happy in it. It fills me like mountain air. It tastes good like hill water. I like the name of it, be it Unitarian. Or will you call me by no name, and say I own none, because he who is anything is nothing? I shall not quarrel with you; neither feel I at all cold if I be stripped in that manner. For the best name is but a little thing when a man has fenced it, and all of them together are not worth a contention. You will call me Naturalist, or Rationalist, or Theist? Do so. I like them. They fit me. I would I might be worthy to bear them, for I have found persons called by those names full of sweetness and purity; and certainly they describe well what thoughts I have and what *credo* I love, for I have naught to preach and no hold sufficient for my spirit but simple Natural Religion.

To speak now of Natural Religion, I find in it:

1. The Substance.
2. The Forms.
3. The Records.
4. Human Relations in Religion.

Of these I will speak in order.

First, of the substance of Natural Religion. Now, here I might stop and go no further than this one point. It were not only enough for a sermon but for a whole large discourse, or even whole book, to convey the substance of Natural Religion; for though the grand thoughts of it are few, yes, and simple, yet they are so very grand—such as God, Providence, Love, Trust, Duty, Faith, Peace, Life—that to treat of them is to unlock and open the whole soul. But it is not my purpose in this sermon to explore Natural Religion in such a way, but only to give account of some great features of it, an outline, of which some words about the substance of it must be part.

Now, the substance of Natural Religion is much and rich, thoughts very great and very rich, as I have said. But these thoughts will be greater and richer in some places and some minds than in others; for they will be conceived in their riches and greatness better in higher and more developed natures than in minds more ignorant and less unfolded. But because these higher natures and more unfolded minds have these great

thoughts more richly, and enter into them more, shall we say that the poorer or less unfolded forms of them in less taught or less grown minds, are not religion? By no means. Religion is like pure air. On the finest hill in the wholesomest plain it is no more than air. So religion is not transcended, nor comes to more than its own, in the highest beauty or conception of a saint and seer, and is not extinguished nor despoiled of itself in lowly and poor forms and made rude thoughts of it. Therefore I may take now, in speaking of the substance of it, the least and most unexpanded form that seems to have the countenance or name of Religion. This is, the Adoration of the Good, the Beautiful and the True. Wherever this veneration appears, religion has been born. It has then but to grow and unfold in order to come to all its members, to all its divisions and beauties and powers. But you will say, "Is not Morality also just this same thing, namely, reverence for the good, the beautiful and the true? Yes. "Then how differ Religion and Morality?" Now, this question I have spoken of in two sermons of this volume,* wherefore I ought not to repeat it here, further than to say again, in sum, that religion is adoration of Holiness, Beauty and Truth as now radiant in Being, but morality is adoration of them as to be grown unto and attained in us.

To the Holy, Beautiful and True Being, we give the "Great Name." He is God. He "is above all," as Paul's text says. The name is not made by us, as if men said long ago, "Go to now! let us have a name for the Holiness and Beauty of Being." No; but the name springs in men very early, very far back in the prime shadows of time, with the notions of conception, of angels, of dreams in them, with their first up-look above themselves to Power more great and awful and adorable. The Great Name thus arises, and utters man's sense of the Being who is "above all," rules, carries, guides, orders and makes all. Then, slowly, but surely and never failing, by the growth and progress of the spiritual nature, beginning with the first beliefs of what is good, what is beautiful and true, according to their imperfect vision, the Supreme, the Power "above all," is clothed unto men with Mercy, with Providence, with Salvation and Loving-kindness, and men are clothed with the estate of children unto

*"What is Religion?" p. 1; "Religion and Ethics," p. 11.

him. Then awakes the name "Our Father," and the first substance of Natural Religion hath come to its height and fervor and joy.

So far what I have said has unfolded only from the first of the three parts of Paul's grand words in my text. He says of God that "He is above all, and through all, and in all." I have been speaking only those thoughts which do utter Him as "above all." But now I have to say that Natural Religion thinks of the Father also as "through all"—not a maker, a creator, a planner, a framer, as one may imagine a man sending by his power some message or object to his friend, which will gladden the heart of his friend though he be away and far off. Not so, not a maker and framer; but the One whose *being is* the making of all things, who hath not made the things but now is the things by his own presence and life,—as if the man whom I spoke of should not send by his power any *object* to his friend, but *himself*, and be to his friend by his presence and in himself the gift, the object, the life, the power, and the help, all in one, thus not *conveying* a joy, but himself *being* it, and, if so I may say, by his own living it into his friend. Thus the Father is not far off nor a maker to send anything from a distance away, but the One whose infinite life is itself all things that we have, who, being above all so that all things come of him, so likewise through all, so that naught comes of him to go from him and be without him, but he is unto us those things that in him live and move and have being. Wherefore all men and all the dumb creatures who are our fellow beings, and whatsoever beings may exist anywhere, whom we know not and yet sometime may know, all these, yes, and all the waving trees and little wood flowers and humble plants, through which (so some botanists now tell us) runs very likely some sense of well being which we, with our glorious faculties, have lost count of and can imagine no more—all these, I say, are his children, and gathered into one undivided thought in him; and he is "through all." O what a thought of the great apostle is this, that he is "through all!" It were easy to say "*above all;*" and this have the ages said forever and ever, from the first speeh of man; but to say that he is "through all," this is a great flight of piety which had to wait till the bars and lattices of fear were eaten away by the

elements, and freed the wings of the soul to roam and be at home anywhere; nor afraid of anything, however seeming to dissolve beneath it, because it had wings. O what a thought, I say, of the great apostle! And yet rather would I call it a thought of man, of all men, of the soul itself; yea, and not a thought, as one may wrestle and can understand in mind, like as the body may struggle and get its aim by strength—no not a thought thus, but rather the life, the nature, and being of the soul, its very breath and motion, like unto the breathing of the body which is strength, but not struggle. Therefore, O what the life of man is! I will say what the soul! what the height and depth and the light and the love of natural piety,—that it is this utterance of Him, the Father who is "through all;" not far away, nay, and not near either, for to be near is to be too far, but "through all," and therefore all in Him.

So much being said, in exceeding brevity, of the substance of Natural Religion, we come to religious forms. What has simple Natural Religion to say of all the many forms of religion?

This, first—that there is only one religion. Natural Religion signifies the one universal religion, and is ready to say that all religion is one, and there is but this one religion in the world, nor can be any other. For religion is worship and uplifting of the soul truly to the One True, Beautiful, Holy Being whose name is God and Father. And as he is One, and religion is a going forth unto Him, how can there be more than one religion? If a saint pray, and a savage bow himself before a carved image or a block of wood or a stone, both worship God, for an act of worship can go no elsewhither than unto God, the One.

But though there be only one religion in the world, and can be no more, there are many forms of religion. The one religion appears in many forms. These differing forms bring many things to be joined with religion which are external and belong not to the real nature and true essence of religion; which fact the Natural Religion itself perceives already, and knows itself, and is one and the same thing clothed with one array of form in one place and with another in another place and a third in some other place. Now these many differing forms, wherein outward things are joined with the one pure religion, are called Historical Religions; though it were better to call them Histori-

cal Forms of Religion. All these Historical Religions have truth in them; for all of them share in the one universal Natural Religion, and in that part they are true and everlasting. But all these Historical Religions contain error also, for all are dipped in the ideas of particular nations, races, times; and in that part they are imperfect or erroneous, and transitory.

The chief Historical Religions, or Forms of Religion are six in number: Judaism, Parseeism, China's Religion, Buddhism, Islamism, Christianity. In all of these the substance of religion is the same and is simple Natural Religion. It is more clear in one than in another, more refined, spiritual, fervent, more spoken forth in power and in purity; but it is not alien from any. It is the one substance in them all which makes each of them to be religion. Now therewith the variations which cause them to be Historical Religions, are many, and differ widely in them:

Buddhism is the Historical Religion which was raised in India by the life and teachings of the prophet Gotama. It is marked by sayings of wisdom and piety ascribed to that prophet, and also by traditions of mighty wonders and miracles mingled with his life.

Parseeism is the Historical Religion which was begun in Persia under the inspiration of the teachings of Zarathustra, called by the Greeks Zoroaster, no doubt a great prophet; and the religion has sayings and prayers and great wisdom and fervor ascribed to him, and also a very great array of wonders, miracles and signs done by him and around him.

Judaism is the Historical Religion of the Jews, founded on the Hebrew prophets, chiefly Moses; and it is full of sublime and beautiful wisdom, fervor, ethical truth, in the sayings of the prophets; and full also of its own wonders and miracles wrought around Moses and other great leaders and prophets of the people.

Islamism is the Historical Religion which arose in Arabia by the deeds and teachings of Mahomet. It has great and fervent proclamations and prayers in it, ascribed to Mahomet, and it, like the others, has its miracles gathered about the prophet's life, though few, and less miraculous than the wonderful traditions of the other Historical Religions already mentioned.

The Religion of China, or Confucianism, was builded in China by the teaching and life of Kung-fu-tsee, called by us Confucius; it is full of calm and high and gentle wisdom ascribed to that teacher, but it is strangely free from the stories of miracles and signs which throng in all the others of the six chief Historical Religions.

Christianity is the Historical Religion which began in Palestine in the life and teachings of the prophet Jesus of Nazareth. It is full of very beautiful teachings ascribed to him, very pure and high and spiritual; and it has a great tradition of miracles and signs wrought by him or around him to establish his mission and authority.

Christianity is simply a Historical Religion. It is one of the great and chief six, no more, no less. It is not the one true and perfect religion, as its believers say it is. All the believers of each one of the Historical Religions say the same thing of their religion. They say it is the one religion which is true and everlasting. But no one of these religions is so. Every one of them partakes of Natural Religion, and in that part it is at one with all the others, and is truth and everlastingness. But every one of them also has its own special doctrines, claims, ceremonies, rites, and all but one have arrays of miracles which each one claims to be the divine proof of the supremacy and perfectness of it; and in this part they are merely historical, not spiritual, merely so many events in some time and some place and not the natural substance of the soul's worship always and everywhere; and therefore in this part they are temporal and transitory. And this is true of all of them, and of Christianity as surely as of any of them. After reading much in them all and with admiration of every one of them, I think indeed that Christianity is larger, more chaste, more serene, more fervent, with more power in it of unfolding and growing toward perfectness, and with local, temporary, transitory elements less intimately and structurally mingled with the Natural Religion in it, than any other Historical Religion. But if it be so, there is naught marvelous or strange therein. If some one of the Historical Religions had not attained to a broader vision than the others, this were the strange thing. But I say this of Christianity very modestly, with no bold self-confidence, with remembrance that

the believer born into any other of the Historical Religions conceives likewise of his own religion, with a sense specially of the fecund and unfolding power which Judaism is displaying, and finally with a pure historical indifference whether it be Christianity or any other of them which is the higher and nobler, for I am simply glad in the human nobleness and go to it with love and stretch my hands to it, whatever be the name of it.

Here again in these many forms of religion, we come to the apostle's grand words that the "Father is above all and through all." "*Above all*" he is, for he is the One, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Life and Love and Presence whom all the forms reach and struggle unto, and sing and praise and pray. And he is "through all" the forms, because men as little can pray and think, or dream or praise or glorify apart from him and of themselves, as they can walk or be born or live or die of themselves; but he is through all, through all the forms, and through all the religions that are named and are but forms added unto the one only religion; through all these he is the same Providence, the same Reason, the same Life and Love, bringing them all to pass, all to grow till they change as seeds into shoots, and shoots to stems, and stems to trees, till they lift mighty heads into the skies. Through all he is, and lives in that manner which we call truth; for whatever is is so in him, and to see anything as it is is to behold his nature and to see him; and in all the many forms and names is truth, and no one of them is all false and all a failure, but every one of them is true in part and in part yet striving for truth, like a tree which hath formed many rings of sound wood and hath told in them the truth of its age, and yet makes a new ring every golden season, and predicts not the sum of its years, as it cannot do because it cannot know the Father in his infinity; but it hath told the truth of its past, because it knows the Father not falsely but truly, though only in part. Thus he is through all in the truth of all, and truth is one, and all the many forms of the one religion are gathered in him into one thought, as all the many worlds are in one law and in one space; and he is through them all in that truth of them all which is the one pure, upstriving, humble piety and worship of the human soul; which is the same as the child-instinct in it, never ceasing to cling to the Father, and to

cry aloud with prayer for him when in need, and with songs unto him in joy.

So far I have spoken of the substance of Natural Religion, and of the historical forms of it. The substance is one and universal, being love and worship unto the One Supreme, True, Beautiful and Holy Being whose name is God, in whom all men, and all the dumb animals who are our fellow beings, and whatsoever creatures may exist anywhere, "live and move and have their being." The historical forms of this one religion, which is to say, the one substance joined with divers local and temporary things, are many, and are known as Historical Religions. Now I come to the third point in the history of Natural Religion, namely, that all these Historical Religions make for themselves Records. In these Records are written down the lives of the great founder, teachers, prophets, singers of the faith, with their teachings and psalms and prayers, and with the miracles, "wonders and signs" and "mighty works" told of them. For the stories of miracles and signs always grow up and are received simply and fondly, when men are full of reverence and not yet have have learned the laws, actions and properties of natural objects.

These Records which the Historical Religions thus make for themselves are called Scriptures. The books of them are holy and sacred, and to believe them reverently always is a part of the religion. The Bible is the Scripture of the Jews and the Christians. The Old Bible is the Scripture of the Jews. The New Testament is a collection of the writings of the first Christians; and all the books of the Bible, both of the Old Testament and of the New, are the Christian Scriptures.

Now in what manner ought we to read this Scripture, the Bible? In three ways, namely, with reverence, with care, and with reason: reverently, because it holds great, beautiful and devout thoughts, the teachings, psalms and prayers of holy men and prophets; carefully, in order to understand it aright, for which indeed much care, knowledge, judgment, comparison and study are needful; rationally, because reason is the light of the mind whereby to try all things and judge what is true.

Here come we to the third thought in Paul's grand text, not only that God is "above all" and "through all," but "in all,"

and in *us* all—the light of reason. Reasoning is the mind's eye, and the sight of the truth therewith. There are things which reasoning cannot compass. And there are distances which the eye cannot resolve, but it can save us from pits at hand. Likewise reason, though it reveal not all nor resolve all distances of truth while yet we are far off from them, nor can show us yet all that infinitely is reasonable, yet it can save us from pits of the unreasonable. And as the light of the sun, which is God's shining, fills the eye of the body, so doth his indwelling Presence, his life in whom we live, his spiritual enlightenment, fill and open the reason, the eye of the soul. How strangely have men denied the reason! How sottishly have they thrown it away! How impiously have they scorned it! It is "at enmity with God," it is but a "carnal reason," it is blind and deceitful, mischievous, it leads away from God, it must be put away and simple belief or faith must be followed, or perhaps a church or a book, nay, the reason is so "carnal" and so unfaithful to us and unreligious that it is well to confound it as much as possible, and he has the most excellent faith who declares the most unreasonable things, like the Schoolman who said "I believe this doctrine because it is incredible, I accept it because it is impossible"—these, and many such things, have men said about human reason; not perceiving that it is divine reason, the divine within us, God communing with us, his light enlightening us, and "in us all," and if we deny the reason, we have hooded our eyes from knowledge of God and have turned us from his appearing unto us. In all the sallies of the reason from the ports of sense, God dwells in us and goes with us. He is "in us all." Not any son of man anywhere hath he inspired more truly nor dwelt in him bodily in fulness more absolutely than he is "in us all" and maketh the reason light and giveth vision. Wherefore we are to treat our reason holily and reverently, and though it resolve not all things and all distances, yet, while we await more, we are to walk with it reverently now, and know it is the action of the whole soul toward God, and it is the eye which he hath made or given us in his own likeness, and the sight of it is by him and with him and his indwelling, "by whose light we see light." So saith simple Natural Religion. Let the reason be used and followed, in things human and divine, patiently, with piety, with

trust to wait and, when we see clearly, then to speak or to do, unfearing, with a lowly bravery, for God is "in us all."

Now, finally, I come to human relations in Natural Religion. What must these be? In what way, by the spirit of simple Natural Religion, shall we encompass each other and live one with another? This is a great thing. For it were strange if Natural Religion, which turns us, by first light, unto God, had naught to do in turning us one to another; strange if, going unto the Father, there were no bonds therein between the children going together. Now it is a curious thing in the Historical Religions, or at least a very notable thing, and I cannot but think it also strange to the simplicity of reason, that men have paid much more reverence and devotion to the historical parts of religion, the local events, traditions, and the color which has been taken from one race and one time,—to this, I say, men have done much more reverence than to the one simple and pure substance of religion itself. It is the historical parts that they have clung about with intensity. Now, as it is in the historical forms that men differ, being at one in their simple Natural Religion, their great homage to the historical parts, has nursed the differences of men and set their minds on their alienations rather than on their unities. Hence have arisen wars, hatreds, persecutions, the bitterness of sects. The Historical Religions have taken but small account, on the whole, of the human relations, so small indeed, that it has been accounted a piety in one religion to hate men of another faith. But in simple Natural Religion all are as one, and this pure faith is very kind, and hath as much to say of the fellowship of the children in the Father as of the adoration of the Father. Therefore human relations are very sacred points in Natural Religion; but the principles are very simple withal, and to be stated in a few words, though large works were needed to open and apply them to all human conditions and companying.

These simple principles are expressed thus,—that the most sacred things in human relations are Love and Duty. But Love—what is that? It is a deep and kind feeling of fraternity and fellowship with all creatures, as one family in the Fatherhood of God. And Duty—what is that? The sum of Duty is to confess every creature and thing to be what it is, and to be-

have toward it according to its nature. The sense of Duty lives in the word Ought, which we speak and understand because we are children of the Eternal and Holy, who is God.

We live, therefore, in this one bond, of three parts,—unto our Father in Worship, unto all creatures in Love and in Duty. This is the sum of the whole matter. "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Here now I have set forth, as best I could, the simple doctrine of Natural Religion. Paul has uttered it in a three-fold way in the grand words of my text, that it is the thought of God, of the Father, above all and through all and in us all. Likewise, as I have followed the path of the expounding of it as best I could, I have found it a wide road of three separate foot-ways, though different from the three-foldness which the apostle has given it. The apostle's three-foldness clashes not at all with this other which I have found; and like enough, if I were to study farther and more curiously, I might find other three-fold divisions; for it is to be noted how often thoughts and things do run in threes. The three foot-ways or paths of the highway of Natural Religion, as I have been walking in them in this discourse, are these: that we live unto the Father in religious worship, which is to say in that devout feeling which binds us back unto our source, and adores therein the infinitely Holy, Beautiful and True. And again, that we live unto all creatures in love, for that we must hold all in our hearts who also are in the heart of the one Father of all; and again that we live unto all creatures in duty, which is to say that we must strive to see them as they are in truth, and to act toward them according to that truth. Here then are the three paths of the highway,—the looking of the soul unto the Infinite who is our Father, and love and duty to all creatures who are our fellow-children. Now as Paul set forth one three-foldness in his grand words, so has an elder prophet, Micah, long before the great apostle, set forward this other three-pathed roadway of the natural religion of man in that noble saying of his which I have repeated just now, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

This I have called Natural Religion; and how better could it

be named? For if it be religion to love the Good, the Beautiful and the True, and love nothing better, nor so well, and to lift the heart devoutly to these wherever they shine, then truly this is religion. And if it be religion to be moved with the thought that the Holy, the Beautiful, the True is infinitely and supremely living, now and in the beginning and ever to be, One and Eternal, without shadow of turning or change, and now pressing on the eyes and ears and touch and thought and love and hope with instant and infinite glory, in whom we and all things have being—then surely this is religion. And if what springs in the heart everywhere be natural, then this is *Natural* Religion. If what knows no bounds of time or space, but in every age has shone out, and in every place has builded temples, be natural,—then this is Natural Religion. If what can be confined to no earth but must be the same everywhere for thinking, feeling and praying creatures, be natural—then this is Natural Religion. And if that which is all-sufficient, which comprises all the glory of thinking and all the devoutness of worship, and all the fixedness of hope, and all the winged speed of faith, in one thought and rapture, be natural,—then this is Natural Religion. And if whatever stands steadfast in life and steadfast in death be natural,—to walk by on earth and to walk by off the earth, whither we know not, only that we go by and with this, —then this is Natural Religion. It is sufficient, the thought of the One who is God, the Father, "above all and through all and in all."

EFFECT OF BELIEF ON CHARACTER.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.—Eph. iv, 5-6.

In my last sermon I spoke from the latter half of this text. From it I spoke of Natural Religion. Now I shall speak from the former part, namely, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." I shall not be disturbed by the question whether or not Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians; for whether by the apostle's own hand or by some other, it seems to be by his spirit; I mean it is all genuine, fresh, wide, noble, Pauline in thought and purpose. Therefore I will call the writer Paul. Paul's meaning is that the Christians must keep "the bond of peace," being "one body," with "one Master," who is Christ, "one faith," which is belief in Christ, one form or sign of entrance into the Christian community, which is "baptism."

Side by side stand the two sayings in the text, compounded in the apostle's page as in life, the universal and the partial, the free and the bound, the spiritual and the formal, the eternal truth and local creed. "One God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all." This is simple Natural Religion. One God, one Holy Spirit of whom come all things in his own image; perfect love, the Father of all; all-powerful, who ruleth all things and never slumbers nor sleeps, infinitely near, present, with all, in all, "through all," Preserver, "Path, Motive, Guide, Original and End;" not only "through all" the outward universe, its light, motion, beauty, being, but even "in us all," the light, joy and blessedness of mind, inspiration, noontide of thought, night of rest, strength, peace, hope, love.

Beside these grand and glorious words, which rise in the atmosphere of the everlasting, stand those other words of mistaken hope, disappointed and ever to be disappointed—"One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." What an impossible, delusive

dream was this,—that all the world should take one spiritual Master, one statement of faith, one form of confirmation! And yet, strangely and instructively, these words of delusion were spoken by the noble-minded Paul out of the very breadth of the broadest soul, save the Master's, whose name has come to us from that time in the Christian writings. Paul's thought of one Master, one faith, one form, was the fervent out-reaching of the great apostle's charity. Like the heavens of God, he wished to stretch out his words "as a tent to dwell in," to cover all the people of the earth. He wrote not nor spoke them as a formalist. Contrariwise, he meant by them to rebuke the formalism of the Jewish party among the Christians. Jesus, the Christ, the Expected One, the Messiah of God, was a Jew, they said, born of the Jews, sent to the Jews specially for their glory and deliverance, they being the peculiar people of Yahweh. Let, therefore, the Gentiles, if they will share in the redemption, enrol themselves among those to whom the Christ was sent; let them submit to Hebrew observances, share in Hebrew ceremonies, perform the rites and believe in the religion. No, said Paul; it is good to be a Jew,—they have been blessed peculiarly; in the old time they were chosen for honor and blessing; but there is one God and Father of all who is over *all* and through *all* and in *all;* he "hath made of one all the nations of the earth;" the Jews are his people, but, as the Master said, there are other sheep of his, not of the Jewish fold; and they all shall be gathered, till there shall be only one fold and one shepherd; Jesus, the Christ, came *of* the Jews, but he came *to* all the world; he called also the Gentiles to salvation; and by his call he commands you to put away the ancient enmity; the Gentiles shall come freely; Christ broke down the doors and overthrew the walls; you shall not erect them again; you shall not hamper them in the acceptance of the great salvation by your forms and ceremonies, which are strange to them, or even wrong in their sight; these things are not essential; they are externals; if put forth as necessary, they become "beggarly elements," "stumbling-blocks," abominations; the nations shall come as they are; they need not first become Jews; they shall partake freely of the Father's mercy; they shall be gathered from near and from far; they shall be told how the long-looked-for

Christ came not only to the Jews as was expected, but to all mankind; they shall be instructed in the one thing needful,—simple faith in him; and then, when again he shall come in the clouds of heaven and the great advent, which we expect daily, shall shake the earth, and the son of man shall reappear to claim and protect his faithful—then Jew and Gentile, Scythian, Roman, Greek, the rich, the poor, the ignorant and learned, the bondman and the free, shall be gathered into one heavenly fold with Christ to lead them, and there shall be "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."

This was the broad, generous, free and charitable thought of Paul. Yet see how mistaken he was! The event in no wise was like the glorious vision of the apostle. Let those ponder this who dream, or act, as if *they*, at any rate, have achieved final truth, and the future can have no part but to repeat what they have said.

There never has been nor is "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." There is not one Lord. The world is divided between many religions of rival names and authorities and books. Even among the Christians there is not one Lord. Each sect has its own view of Jesus. To one he is an atoning sacrifice; to another an inspired mediation, but no sacrifice; to one, a person in a triune deity; to another, the One Infinite himself; to another, a simple man inspired and glorious.

Again, there is not one faith. A glance at the conflicts, not only between sects, but in the bosom of the same sect, reveals the hopeless diversity.

Still less, if possible, is there one baptism, one form. Consider, how forms vary, from Quakerism to Romanism; how they have appeared, changed and vanished throughout church history; how evanescent forms are by nature, and how certain it is that, in lapse of time, they must be as changeable at least as belief is.

As, then, whether we judge by experience or by the nature of the human mind, the apostle's view evidently is mistaken, can there not be a unity in all the diversity? If not the unity of the apostle's dream, some other? Yes; such a unity can be found in this, that all sincere and good men of every faith are seeking for *the Truth!* The Truth! here is the term which in-

cludes and unifies all the systems and names in which fanatics flourish and wage war. Truth-seeking—this is the unity, the common term of all religions. It is simple, pure, grand, a large base of union and of peaceful, kind, brotherly fellowship. If we could attain to the broad spirit, the universal charity in devotion whereunto Paul wrote these memorable mistaken words of my text, that he might cover with the roof of the tabernacle the despised world of alien gentile blood to which his soul yearned,—then we should found a noble fellowship on naught but honest truth-seeking, and build, fair and grand, the "Church of the Spirit."

But what I have said includes another unity embracing all the diversity. I have stated the unity of this fact, namely, that all sincere and good men of every faith are seeking for the truth. There is, then, this other unity or common fact also, namely, that all of the different sects actually do contain good and sincere men. This is the unity, surely a momentous one, on which I will dwell in this discourse.

This is a vast fact. No day but it meets us face to face. Certainly it is no less obvious than momentous. For aught I can see, as good men can be found in any sect as in any other. No name or company has monopoly of virtue. The sincere, true, upright, benevolent, pure-minded troop under every name, and under no name. They are Episcopalians, Calvinists, Methodists, Unitarians, Universalists, Romanists, Spiritualists, Radicals, Materialists, Agnostics, Ethical-Culturists; and by whatever other name any men are known, by that name also good men are known. Now what lessons are we to gather from this cheering and happy fact? This is my question herein.

I ask the question because often I have heard the matter treated in conversation after a manner both false and hurtful, as I think. Often and carelessly it is averred, and repeated with much triumph, as if thereby ought to be silenced and shamed all the audacious men who insist on debating opinions and principles, that belief has naught to do with character. It is of no consequence, we hear, what a man believes if only he be good in act. Beliefs have no effect on character, it is averred, because constantly we see men equally good in act professing the most opposing views.

Now, the fact that good men adorn all sects and names proves not that beliefs affect not character, but only that the beliefs which affect character in this time are not those commonly supposed to do so. All beliefs affect character in measures as they fulfill two conditions. First, of course, the belief must be of a moral character, containing an ethical element. Belief in the importance of arithmetic or in the facts of political geography obviously neither are good nor are bad for character. But belief and understanding of the mighty glories of astronomy, belief in the calculations and results of geological science, tremendous, awe-striking, belief in the researches of masters of languages, and the history opened thereby,—who can say that such beliefs move not the character? Does not such knowledge ennoble and dignify the mind, enlarge and exalt the whole being of a man? If a still pool offer its bosom to the night and pillow the starry head of darkness, it becomes as celestial as the heavens that come down to lie in it. In like manner the soul which spreads its intelligence under the starry skies, will itself flash with divine rays, be companied with the hosts of heaven and join its praise to the song of "the morning stars." When the earth not only to the body yields her incense, but to the mind her stone tables of the elder law and primeval time, when language like a sibyl utters its secrets and tells us the prehistoric wanderings of our migratory race, the mind is enraptured, filled with a quickness of beauty, lifted up by acquaintance with grandeur, enlightened by knowledge of order, calmed by contact with infinite patience, stirred to a holy emotion. These beliefs so affect us because they have high mental and spiritual significance. Their breath is beauty, order, power, purpose, to perceive which is to have deeper and more serene life. If we ascend to belief of things more sacred, wherein moral ideas are distinct, beliefs touching God, the human soul, religion, duty, faith, trust, love, we see of course that such thoughts must influence character immediately *in measure as they are deeply and sincerely believed.* Herein lies the second condition on which belief affects character. Of course a mere lip belief, a profession of faith not understood or not deeply felt, will do naught. Belief must be profoundly conceived. There is a "wide difference between professed and realized belief. When an opin-

ion that is opposed to the age, is incapable of modification and is an obstacle to progress, at last it will be openly repudiated; and if it be identified with any existing interests or associated with some external truth, its rejection will be accompanied by paroxysms of painful agitation. But much more frequently, civilization makes opinions that are opposed to it simply obsolete. They are relegated to the dim twilight land that surrounds every living faith; the land, not of death, but of the shadows of death, the land of the unrealized and the inoperative. Sometimes, too, we find the phraseology, the ceremonies, the formalities, the external aspect of some phase of belief that has long since perished, connected with a system that has been created by the wants and is thrilling with the life of modern civilization. They resemble those images of departed ancestors, which, it is said, the ancient Ethiopians were accustomed to paint upon their bodies, as if to preserve the pleasing illusion that those could not be really dead whose lineaments were still visible among them and were still associated with life."* That beliefs abstract and mystical, beliefs of religious doctrines, do affect character very deeply, is manifest from a glance at the history of religion. An intense conception of the existence and activity of evil spirits pursuing their mischiefs among men, coupled with such a belief in miraculous interferences of divine power and angels and demons as we cannot conceive of at this day, nourished for centuries the horrors of witchcraft. The intense images of hell and of the salvation of only a few of mankind, images intensely conceived beyond all understanding by us at this day, produced the fierce reign of agony, despair and religious terror in the middle ages; created the tortures, fires, persecutions, dungeons and inquisitions by which men sought to compel the wayward into the one way of salvation which was the church; turned the mind from morality which could not atone for error of creed, to doctrinal compliance which was the one condition of salvation, and thereby produced those extraordinary examples of devout criminals which puzzle our minds,—men cherished by the church, scrupulous in doctrine and devotion, while yet doing atrocious crimes and living shamelessly. The same beliefs incited zealous church fathers and their successors in ecclesiastical authority to

*Lecky's History of Rationalism.

maintain the excellence of pious frauds, wherein to deceive and lie unblushingly whenever they thought thereby to convert a heathen or reclaim a heretic. Still more revolting was the kindred notion, widely taught, that no faith need be kept with a heretic.

Nothing is plainer than that beliefs when intensely conceived, really taken into the heart, do affect character mightily. It is a common saying that a man is good in spite of his creed. This is impossible. No man is good, nor can be, in spite of his creed, his *real creed.* He may be good notwithstanding what he assents to; but he cannot be a good man in spite of what truly he believes and conceives in his soul. Men are not now calm, simple, honest, merciful and tolerant in spite of the orthodoxy of old times, but because they have no such orthodoxy. Five hundred years have not changed the human mind. If men now truly believed and *conceived* the creeds which they only repeat in words, they would be like the medieval men, with the same traits which in them were the fruit of real belief and mighty conception. It is noticeable that the calm, quiet, liberal, gentlemanly, charitable orthodox people, are those who think not at all but take their faith assentingly, or those who for soundness in the faith have but doubtful repute.

But if one cannot be a good man in spite of his *belief* in bad and degraded doctrines, can he be good altogether in spite of his *assent* to them? I said he could be upright in spite of *what* he assented to; can he go quite unharmed *by his assent?* No; verily no. His assent is harmful, weakening, undermining; being careless and heedless, a thoughtless and unearnest avowal of deep and sacred things, the assent casts down the elevation of the mind, the power of the understanding, the rectitude of reason, the watchfulness of conscience, moral earnestness for the truth. The insincere state of mind thus is gendered which has been called a characteristic of the present age,—an age, it is said, "destitute of faith but terrified at skepticism," "in which people feel sure, not so much that their opinions are true, as that they should not know what to do without them."* I like not this description of this age. I believe it not. Yet it describes truthfully many men of this age.

*Mill, 'On Liberty."

Now, since I take it as plain that belief affects character in proportion as the belief has a moral element in it and is deeply conceived, and that no one can be a good man in spite of his *real* creed, I recur to this good truth, namely, that there are excellent men in all faiths and shades of faith, and that this fact shows that the beliefs which most affect character in this time are not those commonly supposed. The era of dogmatic theology has passed away. Woe if it return! But it cannot return! Except in seasons of dreary business stagnation, and then only by bad appeals and shocking means of excitement, men are filled not now with frenzied fear of danger to their souls. The natural, healthy man goes now about his business honestly, does good to his neighbor kindly, lets the priests alone, and is unconcerned about salvation. The times have changed; the old theological doctrines are uttered still, but it is only with lip-service. They are not deeply conceived. Men have given their minds to vast enterprises of commerce, philanthropy, morality. They are occupied with digging the earth for its treasures of knowledge and of wealth, with social ills, with political problems, intemperance, poverty, crime, ignorance, hospital, prisons, libraries, schools. This is well; it is very well; great good comes of it, and more yet is to come.

But let us not forget the deep conceiving of God which made so solemn and so devout much great and saintly life in times far gone. Deep was the conception of the being and the presence of God, even with many ignoble and undisciplined thoughts of him. And it cast a holy light around it. May not an equal conceiving of God and present looking unto him arise and abide with us, and spread again a holy light, raise again a rapt vision, a joy,—especially seeing that our thoughts of him are so much grander, purer, more truly like unto him? If we conceive deeply of the Fatherhood of God, there will be fruit of it in a kind brotherhood unto men. If of God in creation we have deep conceiving, then shall we know what "the divine order" means, faith shall be enlightened, resolution strengthened, trust lifted up, repining quelled. If the Holy One, who is Eternal, be conceived and established in us, how can stand pitiful tricks, business falsehoods, insincerities, intemperance, compromise, court of vicious power? These will be impossible.

They will fall to pieces by neglect, because men look away from them to the Eternal Holy Unity of God in things. If men conceive truly the voice of God in their own soul, which is wont to tell them more than "seven watchmen set above in a high tower," then they will be quiet that they may hear, true to reason and conscience, understanding that religion is simple and inward, building the true church and "holy of holies" in "private worth."

To this deep of conceiving let us aspire. It is natural. It will arrive. Let us seek unto it and hasten it. Meantime, despise not any pure ethical earnestness, nor dare to call it religionless. Give glory to the moral devotions of this time, devotion to man, to liberty, to higher justice, to social fellowship, to the conviction that *love* must be *an element of calculation in economical and political philosophy.* So far as these live in our time, the time is one of inspiration; and they live very much in noble souls, and make very many souls noble and generous, and are "a saving health to all peoples." These are the devotions, these make up the doctrine, without true belief in which no man can be a good man, which whoever disbelieves will be a bad man, and whoever believes and deeply conceives will be made a good man by them. To state these moral devotions in one creed, it is this, that Right is Right, and Wrong is Wrong, and no power can make one into the other or to be like the other or to bear the fruits of the other. This is the creed which stands mightily, which makes character; and no man will be a bad man who conceives mightily that Right is Right and will bear the fruits of Truth; and no man can be a good man in spite of believing that Right and Wrong are but little different, customs, not principles, and will bear like fruits. To this purpose here I will quote words from William Salter—since I can devise none better, nor so good—a man whose words move me "more than with the sound of a trumpet," from his noble discourse on "What Ethics can do for Us":

"The moral laws are neither effects nor things that happen, nor is their contrary conceivable—they do not exist for ends beyond themselves, but to dominate all other ends; their victory in a universe, a universe transfigured by them, would be its own

reason for being—a real end, a consummation, beyond which no greater glory could be. No man can ask, without cause for shame, why should he do justice, why should he love? These are his life, the things for which he exists—ay, if he wished to be just for some ulterior gain, he could not do so, for justice is in the heart, is on principle or it is not at all; and he who practices it for profit, or to gain notice or applause from man or God, dishonors what is sacredest in the world.

* * *

That right and justice actually rule the world may be open to dispute, but that they ought to, that they are supreme over all else, that our part as men is to help make them rule, that human life has this as a part of its ultimate law and aim—of this, the one may be as sure as that the earth is under his feet; and sense of it seems to lend infinite dignity to this passing life of ours.

* * *

To know that in a given situation there are many ways in which we may go wrong and only one in which we can go right, that we may miss our goal as well as attain it, that things do not necessarily work for our benefit save as we choose the good, that the invisible Rectitude may be shown in undoing us as well as in making us prosper, and that always beyond our longings and the most imperious cravings of the heart is the question of what we are really worth—with what solemnity may such thoughts affect us!

* * *

The task for us to-day is to make our religion ethical and to make a religion of our ethics. I suppose we all feel it—religion in any high sense is not the fact of our time. We have our institutions to which we point with pride, but religion is not one of them; we give our wealth to its service, but not our hearts; we are 'moral,' but not on principle; that which made the early church sublime—the transcendent hope, the sense of the sanctity of heaven about to descend and touch the earth—is not with us; the fires of the heart are so low that we smile at those who conceive great hopes for mankind. I appeal to you, young men, disown such skepticism and be the bearers of moral ideas to this day and generation. Trust your heart and dare for justice and the right in every department of human life.

Nurse in yourselves not only charity, but hearts 'of steel to fight down the proud.' Open your souls and drink in faith and courage with each new dawning day. Surrender *yourselves*, first of all, to the moral sentiment, since only those who are right can set things right. In a word, take these slighted moral principles, behind which the Power of powers is hidden, and make a religion of them. The sublime is after all not far from the common day; we have not to reach after it or travel for it; we have but to turn the eyes inward, and there it is!—native, constitutional to us, the life of our life, the soul of our soul, an Infinite Majesty waiting to transfigure us, to rescue us from our mortality, to make us deathless with itself."

This simple creed, that Right is Right, Wrong is Wrong, and one cannot be made to serve for the other, and each will bear its own fruits, the one unto life, the other unto death, this is that without true conception and belief of which no man in any religion or sect can be a good man; but it flourishes in all sects, in many names and with no name; and in all sects, whoso believes it in very truth becomes a good and noble soul, enriching mankind. But now this one simple creed I will state under three beliefs, which are needful, which mould character; and no man can be a good man in spite of not believing them:

First, we must hold fast to the belief, and deeply conceive it, that we *ought* to improve, and *can*. Equally to *duty* and the *ability* we must hold. No man can grow in nobleness who believes not that he *can*. To deny the capacity is to overturn the duty and efface acknowledgment of it. This is the proper effect of the doctrine of a fallen mind, "totally depraved" human nature, which stands in the creeds, and has been much cried up and fearfully preached, though little now is said of it. Have men been good at any time *in spite of believing* this article of their creed? No; but because they only assented to it, and gave lip-service to it. What truly men have believed is that a man *can* be a good man; and this is the belief more truly conceived now than ever; and no one can be a good man in spite of not conceiving truly that he ought to grow in nobleness and that he can.

Secondly, we must believe in the improvement of the world.

It is needful to see and hold to the sight that the world has been growing better, still grows so, and has a divine necessity to grow in that manner, because it comes of God, and naught can come of him to fall away into evil but to grow up unto him in good. This sight of "the stream of tendency," of the world's improvement, we must hold fast, because there is no other joy for us, nay, nor any hope either, while we strive for our own improvement, but to see the like around us. Also this is necessary to faith in the Right and to deep conception that "Right *is* Right" and will bear the fruits of it; that "however things may *seem*, no good thing is failure and no evil thing is success;" that Right is life and growth, but Wrong is death, and "all things work together" to "make an evil thing as if it had never been."

Finally, we must believe that we *ought* to help the world improve, and that we *can*. Herein, as well as touching our individual improvement, we must hold fast equally to the duty and the capacity. We must find our life in the life of others, mingled as well as apart. We must understand and take on us a solemn answerableness, if we know any truth, to speak it forth. We must conceive deeply that "no one liveth to himself" but "unto the Lord" and for others, that he saves his life who is willing to give it for a holy cause, and that mysterious and holy bonds and currents of power unite one to another the world over, precipitating you and me in some mystical way under pine and palm alike, on deserts and seas. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Yes. He is a murderer who says not so. Is it too hard a duty? But how will you escape it? It lies in your own life, in the quality of your own being and doing by which you affect others. Too hard? But it is only the being a man? No otherwise than by ceasing to be human can you cut yourself away from the mysterious webs of moral influence, by which each one is tied unto all.

Believe in yourself, that you ought to grow noble, and can.

Believe in the world, and love it as it is, and love it because it rises up and grows toward the truth.

Believe in your duty to the world, to help it on its righteous way, and that you can make your life count in it.

By these beliefs will come a brotherhood,—mankind one fold with one Shepherd, "led in green pastures, beside still waters."

NATURAL RELIGION.

An Anchor of the Soul—Hebrews, vi. 19.

This is the search of all religion, "An Anchor of the Soul," something that shall hold us, steady and stay us, bind us to the immutable.

But why wish we to be anchored? Because all about us there is perpetual motion; and not only so, but perpetual change, the passing away of the old; the coming in of the new, discoveries, amendments, new forms and statements, new truths and aspects, new motions and conditions for which the old offer no guide; and these changes often come on with agitations, terrors, revolutions. These are movements of life, social, political, moral, religious. In these changes, therefore, a common cry is for anchorage-ground and an anchor. If all things move, often tumultuously, there is the more need that we be still and steadfast, unless we will be mere weeds on the tide. If things change, and what seem most sacred, sure, holy, continually depart and return no more, then surely we need some anchor of the soul, fixed in somewhat that shall hold us still while the current sweeps on. For while in the current and of it, we would not be tossed by it. We would use its good things, and part with them again if the flood tear them away, while we ride on the flood at anchor!

But to what shall we be anchored? What can we find whereto to anchor which shall be firm?

The answer to this question is as varied as the many creeds and institutions of men. To these they are taught to look for safety and salvation. The Christian is sure that Christianity—and not only that, but many are persuaded that their own form or interpretation of Christianity—is that religious truth which is immutable. It will survive all the changes of time, say they.

But this Christian confidence is treated with very lofty contempt by the Moslem; for he avers that good and great as Jesus was, God over him placed Mahomet, the last and greatest of his prophets, in whom revelation was perfected. The good Moslem is sure that Mohammedanism is the religion which shall outlast all changes and be the universal faith, to anchor the soul always. But both Moslem and Christian are derided by the calm Buddhist, who equally is sure that his sacred books contain the sum of wisdom which shall prove its title by surviving forever. But now, though this question, To what can we anchor? has answers as many as human creeds,—all the answers, how diverse soever, part into two great classes: The first class seeks the immovable principle, the safe and lasting anchorage, in Nature itself, in the very bosom of the moving and changing order of things. The second class avers that in this shifting scene there is no stable principle for hope and rest, that all things in the current move with it, and thereupon if we would not be swept away we must lay hold of some sure support outside of this changing order and far above it.

The first class looks solely to nature, or the order in which we are, affirming that if there be any immutable, it must be the ground of this very order, bringing its diversities and changes into a unity; and if this immutable can be found, say they, the means and way must be in this self-same order itself. The second class looks for its rest, and its immutable, *outside of the changing order*, affirming that intervention, a special dispensation and enlightenment, has been necessary in order to disclose grounds of confidence and peace; for the "unassisted light of Nature" could discover none, say they.

Now, these two classes, which include all the many answers to the question, To what can we anchor? begin two modes of thought, two views of Nature, religion, Providence and human nature, which are opposed and irreconcilable; they mutually exclude each other and admit no middle term, and one of them, since they are contradictories, must be true. Either the changing order is sufficient, and able out of itself in the simplicity of its unfolding, to give men the immutable; or it is not thus sufficient and able. Either a special dispensation is necessary to give rest and truth; or it is not thus necessary. There is no

middle ground and no third alternative. One is wholly right and the other is wholly wrong, in respect of this difference.

Here, then, I have to set forth in one way (for there are many ways) what I think the right one of these two views, namely, that in the Nature within us and without us we have an all-sufficiency. I have not here to argue this in the whole, nor even to argue for the thought and name of God in the soul, which I like not to do, any more than to argue in behalf of there being eye-sight or hearing. I have only to show that Natural Religion comes, by reason of the thought of God, into peace and rest,—an anchorage for the soul.

Simple Natural Religion speaks first of God, the Eternal One, ever present and working; and not only ever present, but present infinitely; filling all things, guiding, upholding all worlds; giving strength for all deeds; inspiring all souls. He is the One in the many, the Immutable in the changeable, the invincible order which converts all things to himself, "out of his own beauty making all things fair." He is the sunlight and the mind's light. Of him is the eye's sight, and the soul's vision. He lives in the Eternal Now. To seek for him in the past is only to say, *He was*; to look for him in the future is only to say, *He will be*. But his name is "*I am*," and beholding him in the present, we say, *He is*. *Now*, Now, he lives. He works Now. Still and forevermore he is present strength, light, joy, truth, blessing, inspiration. Not only all these, but all these *perfectly*, NOW. He never was any nearer to this earth than he is. He is "over all and through all and in all" fully, perfectly, absolutely; and at no time was he inspiration more directly, more personally, than now he uplifts his children and gives them understanding; at no time ruled and guided he the march of the worlds and men more truly, more directly, or more powerfully, than now his perfect Providence overshadows all.

But because God thus is the Living Present, the Holy Spirit, Natural Religion must trust the right and the truth. Right and truth always are safe in the keeping of God. They need no other Providence. The right is sure to be maintained, the truth surely is brought forth. Things so are framed as "to make an evil thing as if it had never been," and there is a steady unfolding of "the good, the beautiful, and the true."

But, again, if the right and the truth thus be safe and secure, and neither the malice nor the mistaken zeal of men can overthrow them, nor do any more than to retard them for a little while, Natural Religion infers from this the right and the duty of liberty of thought, of speech, of all sincere difference in thinking. For to be intolerant is not only to distrust the security of the truth, but impiously to take it under our impotent protection; and to abridge another's liberty of thinking is flagrantly to assume infallibility and usurp the throne of God. Thought *may* be free and speech free, says Natural Religion, because the truth is safe with God; thought and speech *must* be free, for what finiteness has right or power to decide on the truth and establish it by force?

But, again, if the truth be protected and secured in such way as to give, and not deny, liberty to men; if it be safe simply in the works of God, needing no institution of men to define it and build walls around it; if it progress and men at all times move in it, and more of truth and right is brought to pass, then it follows, says Natural Religion, that truth and right are natural to the conscience and mind of man. For since they are not forced on him by an external power, they must come forth out of him by a free unfolding. The soul of man gravitates to the truth. The soul is made to feed on truth, to adore the good and beautiful, to grope after the divine and find it, and know it ever more and more. Religion is natural to the soul. Aspiration is the attitude of its walk. It "pants for God as the hart for the water-brooks." History is a record of the religious struggles and efforts of the human heart. Forlorn, bleak and savage, in the forests or on sea reefs, Natural Religion has crept forth, or blazed forth wildly, but always come forth in some way, always directed the human eye above itself, whispered faintly of the unheard, dimly pictured the unseen. From the obscure, rude and coarse forms of its beginning, religion has grown with man, always the same natural thing, but ever purer, loftier, more chastened, serene, trustful and adoring.

But, again, if religion thus be natural to man, if his spiritual nature thus tend to religious truth and find its way on toward the light which shines always from afar, then anything professing to be religious truth must appeal to the soul to be

justified. And as the religious nature grows clearer and higher, age by age, like all the human powers, no dictum of the past can override its clear decision in the present. Therefore, as the safety of truth in the Providence of God forbids all tyranny, intolerance and persecution of men, so Natural Religion does away with pretence of divine authority in the past. The soul is its own authority. The religious nature stands waiting, nay, longing, yearning; and all things call it forth, elevate and purify it. It is not created by any institution, nor depends on a form, nor is bound to a doctrine. It needs no special dispensation for its nourishment. In its divine activity it neither awaits nor permits an authoritative book. It is *itself* the *source* of all forms and creeds. It searches, examines, teaches, prophesies, makes churches, doctrines, priesthoods, schools, rites and mysteries. Christianity accounts not for the religious nature. The religious nature accounts for Christianity; also for the Greek, the Roman, the Brahmin; for the Norse myth, the Aztec rite, the Jewish Law, the Persian Fire-worship, the Koran and the Vedas, and for all other ways by which the children of the earth have sought the Father. This religious nature admits of no binding authority in the past, because nothing can be more sacred to it than itself and its directness unto God. The past, grand and glorious as it is, never can hinder or forbid equal soul-life in the present.

"The Bible as interpreted by the Church," says the Romanist, thereby asserting a divine oracle in the past and an interpreting institution in the present. "The Bible as interpreted by each man for himself," said Luther, thereby rejecting authority in the present but clinging to the oracle in the past. Natural Religion submits the mind neither to Church nor to Bible. I could reject the unmistakable teaching of any Bible passage as easily and simply as any other thing that seemed not true. Consider: if any teaching of the Bible come before my mind, I must either believe it, or disbelieve it, or have no view concerning it. If I believe it, then for that reason I accept it; my conviction of its truth is for me its sanctity and authority. If I disbelieve it, then to assent to it is simply to be false and lying. If I have no belief concerning it, then to assent to it without examination is unfaithful, supine, unworthy of an intellectual being. Therefore the Bible stands beside me, not before me. It is a

dear and valued companion, not a ruler. From its grand pages I find rivers of pure water flowing, the water which slakes thirst forever, a spring springing up into everlasting life. It runs over with inspiration and fervor. It teaches, exhorts, inspires, strengthens, exalts. It is woven of the fibres of prophetic souls. It shines with the light of saintly lives. It seems the grandest legacy bequeathed by any race to the world. All this it seems to me, is to me, does for me. But it is not my master. Neither does it include or glorify the truth, but the truth includes and glorifies it.

Thus simply from the thought of God, with which Natural Religion begins, Religion unfolds to these great trusts,—trust in the right and the true, that they are mighty and will prevail, trust in pure freedom of thought and speech, trust in the reason and moral nature of mankind, trust in the religious authority of the soul. These trusts will grow till they bring all religion to their own beautiful image and rule the deeds of men.

Meantime, one thing is certain. The day is past when men knew no other or better arguments than citations from the Bible or the Fathers. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Let no man be blamed for holding whatsoever opinions; but let every man, of any opinion, be blamed if he violate the sanctity of thinking, outrage the spirit of truth, hold views carelessly, enthrone custom instead of rectitude, habit and prejudice instead of truth. For no man always can find the truth, but every man always can seek it. "It is not incumbent on thee to complete the work," said an ancient Jew, "but thou must not therefore cease from it,"—words of comfort and cheer. It is our part to do, to think, to will, to live: *What we gain and finish* is in His hands who orders all things well!

NATURAL RELIGION.

Four ideas I will choose from the several which have a great antiquity among men. These four are the thoughts of God, of Worship, of the Church, of Duty. These are not all the thoughts which belong to the history of the human soul, beginning afar back beyond trace of them, like as if they were too grand to have any beginning. Other thoughts there are, like Space, Time, Eternity, Immortality, Life, Love, Perfectness, all divine, limitless, immemorial. But these four thoughts—God, Worship, the Church, Duty—I single out now for this discourse, that I may show them in some relations to each other, and travel with them the road of Natural Religion.

All these four ideas have come down to us, vast and enduring, from times so remote that no account nor enumeration can be given of the years or the centuries of the age of these thoughts. And they are found everywhere. Equally no time and no place lacks them. And now they survive no less strong than ever they were; nay, stronger.

The first is the thought of God. This thought is universal. There has been no time without the thought and sense of God. Neither has there been any race or tribe without it. As far back as any trace of human reflection can be found at all, there lives the thought of God. And as to places, races, peoples, tribes, of which I have said there is not one without God, certainly there must have been a beginning of the thought, a first time of it, in the mind of the early peoples of the earth, when they came into it during the mystery of their coming forth from a lower intelligence to a higher—the dawn of the human reason —we know not how, nor in what places, nor with what conditions. What man was before he had attained the thought of

God we can not conceive. But sure it is that no numerous people who have been visible to us have been void of this thought. I have read, indeed, that some travelers have reported some very wretched and low tribes to have no thought of God; but if they had said that the poor creatures *gave no sign* of the thought, they would have spoken more modestly and mayhap much nearer to the truth; and if they had said that the suspicious and reticent savages had evinced no sign of a knowledge of the Great Name *visible to them, the reporters*, they would have spoken belike more faithfully still. Consider the difficulty of conceiving the religious thoughts and feelings of any worshipers or people of any faith unlike ourselves, even of a near-akin faith, like Mohammedanism, and still more of a faith farther away, like Parseeism, and very greatly of a faith remote and very different, like China's religion, or Greek and Roman worship; consider how very hard to apprehend thus the signs and feelings of religion in a very low and half-speechless tribe; consider how reticent savages are, unwilling to reveal themselves to strangers and especially reluctant to show their religious observance, which rather they will hide and mask. When these things are considered, it has become apparent wisdom to conclude little from the reports of hasty visitors to a few abject and miserable tribes, the rudest and wretchedest of the earth. Even if they have not come to the thought of God, what would that count? Of what import were that? There must be some first dawn of it over human intelligence; and whether that day-spring be sooner or later matters not. Nay, who would look for so great a light too soon or too low in the horizon? Yet perhaps it were safer to think that even in these very rude and half-bestial tribes some gleam of that thought could be found if we knew how to break through the night and clouds of savage fears and silence.

Wherefore I scruple not to call the thought of God universal. Everywhere it has come forth, nor can be found any trace of a time when it was not. Sometimes, when it has lived a long time in the world and among a people, some are found who deny it; but it is as hard very often to know what they mean by their denial as to cleave to the hidden places of a savage mind. I have heard of a man—and I doubt not he was a good lover of truth—who said, "I am an atheist, thank God;" in which I see a some-

thing devout, a very natural and reasonable thankfulness taking him unaware and childlike. I knew another, who professed his atheism rather volubly methought, but yet seriously and sincerely; and after all, why should he not be as full of words for that view, if seriously he had reflected on it and deemed it wholesome, as for any other? But one day I heard him say, "Last night I listened to a good priest talk, and after him to a philosopher, and they spoke of God so simply and so grandly that I *trembled for my atheism*." Ah! those good trembles! Hadst not learned how divine was the impulse of thy reason, how worshipful thy tremblings for the truth, and how imaged from God thy witness unto what was simple and grand?

The second idea that looks forth on us from all the ages, is Worship. This is the expression of the thought of God. Of whatever kind or virtue be that thought, the expression of it makes the kind or virtue of worship which prevails. Worship must follow from the thought of God, because expression is inevitable. Thoughts and feelings are great pressure in the mind of a man. The soul is torn to pieces if there be no outlet of expression. Pythagoras had a saying, *Cor ne edito*, Eat not the heart; on which Bacon commenting says, that surely a man who has no friend to open himself unto, is "a cannibal of his own heart." And the greater the thought is which the mind harbors, the more must be given it clearance and be canvass of expression spread on it to sail it into other minds. We can not keep grand thoughts and feelings unexpressed. They tear us, consume and destroy us. Hence Worship always followed on the thought of God, the coming forth of it into utterance and sign and psalm and exercise of joy.

The third idea everywhere coming forth and older than all memories or records, is the Church. This arises and follows on the two other thoughts, of God and Worship, because these two come to life only in society. Man grows to them in a social state; or rather, by reason of his social state, for there is no other condition for man but the associative. Alone, man is the poorest of creatures, as poor as any in natural arms and in numbers, the poorest in digestion. But associated, man is the richest of all creatures, both in powers and possessions, and swarms even above the insects. The richest of all riches which

come to man by association and union, and indeed the source of all his other wealth, is his thoughts. Wide thoughts, general thoughts, language, comparison, arise only in social union. Solitude is nothingness. In it naught ever would have arisen in man, nor could he have maintained himself in the war of life; and if a man now go back into solitude in his mind, he melts away from himself all riches. "Who is wise alone? Who is great alone? Who is rich alone?" Men must draw unto each other before any one of them can come to himself. And the greater a thought, the more must it be shared and the more must men come together to speak and enjoy it. Thus, as the thought of God must be expressed in Worship, so Worship must be done in company. Men neither can bear to be alone in so great a thing, nor can any one rise to the height and the riches and the beauty of it alone. Hence comes the Church, which is the companying of men in religion, because they must come close together before the thought of God or of Worship is possible, and then closer together by institutions and assemblies to rejoice in these thoughts and move each other with them.

The fourth idea, which is as reverend as time itself wherever men appear, is Duty. This illumines all the other ideas, the thoughts of God, of Worship, of the Church, with a peculiar light, the reason of which I shall come to farther on in this discourse. At present it is enough to say of this thought of Duty that it is the idea and consciousness of requirement. It signifies, not only that a man may do something if he will, nor that it is well for him to do it because of advantage to him; but that it is required of him and he must do it, by reason of some quality that inheres in himself. For, but for this quality in himself, an amazing and awful quality, he might say, even if he saw plainly that some deed would be good for him and for all others, "Why should I do it? I will do this thing which is pleasant or easy for the moment and give up the thing which really is good on the whole and forever. I may choose as I please, and I choose thus." But because of a certain awful and infinite quality in himself, he can not say this. When he has seen and knows a deed that it is good for all, he knows it is *required* of him and that he *must do* it. He has the power to refuse to do it, but he has not the power to think he ought not to do it. He knows it is required of him.

Whether he can see advantage in it to himself at the moment matters not; still he must do it. Nay, he must do it if it be the immolation of him. This is the meaning of the thought of Duty.

These four thoughts, now, are before us, beaming from æons primeval, from times already ancient at our antiquity,—the thoughts of God, of Worship, of the Church, of Duty.

Concerning all these thoughts, when we look on them, two things strike us. The first is, that they change. The second is, that they change very slowly.

They change because man changes. Picture for a moment the immensity of the changes through which mankind have come to their present stature. Gather them, conceive them at your best, multiply and enlarge them, build them up and pillar them and dome them gigantically; for when you have done all you can, you will picture them but little and see them but as in a small dream. Strive to span in your minds the dome between a Hottentot and an Emerson, a Fuegian and a Jesus. It has been said that belike there is more distance between a Bushman and a Dante than between that same Bushman and a monkey. Yet under and across that immeasurable arc has all mankind moved during the immemorial æons. And through all the stages of that march, these four great thoughts have changed with the changes of man.

But the thoughts have changed very slowly. Not only because the march of man has been slow; for many other thoughts have changed very much more quickly. These four thoughts have changed slowly because they are such great, stable, fast-holding thoughts. They have been like axes around which all the motion and progress has revolved, which therefore themselves must have a steadiness. Men have reverenced these thoughts so much that love and piety have kept them from swift changes. Therefore even yet these thoughts prevail, over most of the earth, the civilized and barbarous equally, very much as they were in the beginning. The changes of them have spotted the world, if so I may speak; that is, the changes have come here and there, in places, and among a few; the vast multitudes the while, whether savage or civilized, not growing very much beyond the primeval types of these thoughts. Thus the moral

and physical creations seem to have moved alike. 'Tis only in places of the earth's surface that primeval elemental ragings seem to have ceased, and softened airs with balms to be established. We may hope for a time when whirlwinds, earthquakes, and like convulsions, which once were more furious, shall cease altogether. So may we look for a time when the first forms of the thoughts of God, of Worship, of the Church, and of Duty, shall have departed everywhere, and Natural Religion be unfolded to its perfected countenance of beauty.

It remains now to ask and answer, *What* are the changes, very sure, very slow, which have come about in these great thoughts? I will speak of the changes in the same order as of the thoughts.

First, of the change in the thought of God. Two things are very distinct and notable in the primeval idea of God. The first is WILL, the second is SEPARATION. In the conception of primitive men, or of barbarous men whether they be primitive or not (for there is much barbarousness left yet, with all our politeness), God is, in the main, an invincible will. He is the "King of kings," a vast and mighty monarch who rules things as he will, and things move and happen because he will have them so. There is no reason for anything but that the mighty Deity wills it; no, not in himself is there any reason, but that he chooses it so, and he might choose otherwise; and often in fact he inclines one way at one time and anon another way, moving things differently, carrying them one way or another, just as he may be pleased and will. He issues commands, as a Cæsar, an imperial monarch, and the decrees are laws until others be sent down to replace them. Now, this mighty Monarch Deity has a place of his own wherein he dwells, according to the conception of primeval men. This is the second notable thing in the far-ancient barbarous thought of God (and in the present barbarous thought of him too, for, as I have said, this early and far-ancient ignorance has not vanished completely, but still holds a court of its own), this notable thing, namely, that God is far parted from his creation. He has a throne and place, a realm in the heavens, where he sits in regal glory and rules the earth from afar. He is outside of this created earth. He has made it, as a man makes some cunning contrivance, and thereupon, from his throne in

the heavens, he rules and orders that it shall go aright. Hence come interventions and miracles. When the course of things turns awry, or the mighty Deity is pleased that they shall be different, he sends angels to do his commands on the earth, or he raises winds, storms, floods, earthquakes, fires, smites men with disease, blindness, madness, or even he descends himself from his throne and walks on the earth to do some great thing.

This is the far-ancient and barbarous thought of God. What is the change which has come to pass in it? The change is that we think not now of arbitrary will in God, but of his nature and being. Not what he wills, but what he is, now takes captive the mind and heart. We conceive of God not as a maker of decrees, but as himself the living law, because all things go forth and follow after his image, after the Eternal Beauty, Goodness and Power which God is. Things are so, not because he *will's* so, and might will otherwise, but because he *is so*, and could not will otherwise than as Eternal Goodness and Wisdom and Mercy and Almightiness are. Also, that no longer we conceive of God as separated, apart, he one Being and the earth a creation swimming apart from him, but that he is in all, and all in him, not only "over all," but, as adds the Apostle, "through all and in all," "in whom all things live and move and have their being." He comes not at times, to amend or change things: he is evermore and from everlasting in all--Presence, Life, Order, Law, Love. There are no miracles, no *special* comings, no portents and signs, no "dispensations;" all is one supreme and holy Order, which is Life and Love, a perfectness with "no shadow of turning."

The second of the four thoughts which I am treating is Worship. What was the primeval thought of Worship? It conformed to the thought of God. As God was conceived to be arbitrary Will seated on a throne afar, Worship was the effort of men to win his favor—propitiation, appeasing, pleasing, entreating—to prevail on him to will in behalf of the worshipers, do miracles for the benefit of them, to work favor to them or confound their enemies. And what change has come to pass in this Worship? It is a change from begging, appeasing, seeking favor, to pure adoration, aspiration, awe, reverence, thankfulness, exaltation of spirit, fulness of heart. It is selfishness

moved up into love; the low places and swamps of advantage-seeking and gain-begging from God, elevated to a bright hill of moral singleness,—love of beauty, of goodness, pure love of them for themselves, veneration, awe and praise of Eternal Perfectness, of God. Worship, in the primeval thought of it, brings sacrifice, the idea of giving something to the Deity, to the great Will and Monarch, that he may be pleased and inclined unto the giver; but Worship in the new and perfected thought of it, brings self-forgetfulness in pure love, a devout up-looking and striving upward, a lowly and exalted rejoicing to adore.

The third thought of the four which we have in view, is the Church. What was the primitive church? What is the change in it? It conformed to the thoughts of God and of Worship. It has changed, to obtain an image and beauty from the new and purer thoughts of God and of Worship. When God was conceived as Arbitrary Will on a far throne, propitious at some times, anon angry, and willing and doing as it pleased him to make way for his favor or his wrath, the Church was perforce a powerful priesthood, charged to proclaim the Monarchical Will of the Deity, to declare what things would please him, what forms of sacrifice and worship would be acceptable, and to conduct that worship for the people in the commanded manner and form of it. The change is to an *association of men in freedom and love.* This is the natural, simple and everlasting Church. It is an association *in freedom;* for the thought of God is no longer an image of Arbitrary Will and a throned King afar off, but of an indwelling Presence, whose Being is Order in Nature and Love in sensible creatures; wherefore men draw together in freedom, according to the desire of their spirit, not hindred nor driven nor prevented by any commanded forms, but making their own forms, and worshiping devoutly for very joy and trust, in whatever way best they can utter their praise and love. And the Church is association in *love;* for no longer it is something to which men are driven because they must appease the Deity through his priests; wherefore it is a companying of men together to confer on mighty thoughts and immortal feelings, because the great things of the soul—thoughts and experience—make men to need each other and to draw together for the comfort and joy of sympathy.

The fourth idea of the four which we are considering, is the thought of Duty. What was the far-ancient thought thereof? What is the change in it? Primevally Duty conformed to the conception of God, that he was imperious and mighty Will enthroned. Duty then was simply obedience to the will of that terrible Cæsar of Deity. To bow, to be prostrate, to obey, to question not, to follow, to confess the Will of the Deity, that was Duty. Right was whatever the Deity should will. The change is to the thought of Duty as related not to the mere decree or arbitrary Will of God, but to his very Being and Nature as the Eternal Justice and Holiness, and then forthwith *to that same nature in us as his children and conceived in the image of the Eternal.* This is why the thought of Duty so illumines all the other thoughts, as in the beginning I said—because it is the image of the Eternal in us, the involving of the finite in the Infinite and of the Infinite in the finite, of the Eternal in the transient and of the transient in the Eternal, the very nature and being and power of God living in us. "The safety of God, the majesty of God, the immortality of God, do enter into a man with justice." God is the Infinite, Eternal and Living Ought,—Eternal, for it changes not, and Living, for it is Almighty Power bringing all things to himself by the preserving of the good and the destruction of the evil. And that Ought also is in *us*. We are of it, by it, can not be apart from it. It is the Life and Image of God in us. All our conditions are of it. Nothing ought to be but it must be. Nothing must be unless it ought to be.

This change in the thought of Duty gives a different meaning to sin, larger and more terrible. Sin no longer is a mere rebellion to be punished with stripes, a disregard of a mere fiat, a dissent from a decree of a Will, but an *alienation*, a loss of ourselves and of God, a darkness and death, which is its own punishment.

This thought of Duty also gives to Righteousness a great beauty, light and joy. No longer it is a legal exactness and scrupulosity, but the living of our own true life, which is *our* life because it is Eternal Life; no longer an inquiry after the decrees of a Monarch, but the opening of our whole being unto God, to know and recover ourselves in him.

"The Koran says: 'God willeth that his law
Should be made light for man, for man is weak.'
But hearken thou and understand: Does gold
Feel itself heavy? Is the falcon's plume
Light to itself? 'Tis merely to itself.
The law of God is *thy* law; otherwise
It could not be thy *law*. Be thou a law
Unto thyself, and then thy life shall be
Light as an eagle's pathway through the skies."

Here again I have tried to give some account of Natural Religion, which is as ancient as man, but not yet is finished nor come to its heavenly perfectness, but shall come, for it unfolds over man by a law of growth in himself. It is not Mosaism, nor Parseeism, nor Mohammedanism, nor Christianity, nor any other historical religion that ever was or will be, but the immortal unity of all of them, to fulfill which they go onward steadfastly because they are living things, albeit slowly because they are great things. "There are many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification." Of them all, the histories, predictions, tongues, knowledge, shall fail, cease, be done away; but the spirit evermore liveth.

NATURAL RELIGION.

Often have I spoken to you of Natural Religion; and, in one way or another, so long as I shall be continued in the happiness of being with you, I shall have to speak of it, whether under its own plain name or under credit of some other subject. For in truth it is all I have to teach or preach.

That we may now have another look into the face of it, and see some features of it nearly, let us imagine a Jew, a Christian and a Mohammedan talking together. They are talking seriously about religion. Each one also is speaking loyally of his own religion and setting it forth in its fullness. For this, each one begins with the most simple and grand ideas of his faith. They speak of God—of the Infinite, of the Eternal, of Holiness, of Perfectness, of Might and Almightiness, of Life, Love, Beauty, Glory, Joy. They talk of Personal Being in God and in Man, of Thought, of Reason, of the Will and its mysteries, of Feeling, Memory, Imagination, Sleep, Dreams, Birth, Death. They discourse of Worship, of the looking of the Soul with awe-full love unto the Source of it, of God the Father, of Man and all Creatures the Children, of Confidence, Trust, Submission, Piety, Faith. They converse of Duty, of the Command in the Soul, the unlimited Ought, the Majesty of it, the image of the Eternal Holiness which it is in the Human Spirit.

Of such thoughts they commune; and they all speak of them like as if they were one Soul with one tongue, one Heart with one song, one Spirit with one language. They are at one in these simple, grand thoughts. Mayhap if they fall to philosophising about them, they will have different ways of explaining them, or of joining them one to another, or of accounting for them, that they are present in the human mind; but they,

the Jew, the Christian and the Mohammedan, all *have* the thoughts, and rejoice in them, and gladden warmly each other in them.

These thoughts, which they have all together, agreeing in them deeply and joyfully, are the substance of Natural Religion. But now after they have discoursed of these, in simplicity and unity, and have gone far together in the common grand thoughts with which all of them begin their religion, they come to a place where the simpleness of the common path divides, and divers ways open. Here it is found that each one takes a path of his own. Which is to say, without figure, that each one them goes on to add somewhat to the Natural Religion in which they all are at one,—somewhat of his own, and this addition makes the Natural Religion to become his own peculiar religion.

I may compare this change (from the common substance of Natural Religion into the special faith and form of each of these three who talk together) to the differences in wines; for these are but divers additions to the one bland and sweet element, water. The one lovely, clear and bright refreshment, colorless and wholesome like air, and welcome to the throat of every creature who is athirst, the vehicle of the spring's coolness, the brook's babble, the river, the ocean, the rainy murmur, the crystal of the snow, the silver and gold of the clouds, sparkling, sweet, peaceable water, this makes the greater part, nine parts in ten, or more, very like, of all the wines of the earth. To this gentle solvent add some measure of alcohol and sundry essential oils, and lo! the Falernian sung by Horace. To the same delicate fluent crystal bring a different quantum of spirits, and other essences, and the wines of the Rhine are made. To the same dip of a brook or catch of rain convey yet another measure of spirits, other aromas and oils, and the Catawba of our own poet's song lights its topaz eye. Thus do the Jew, the Christian, and the Mohammedan with the simplicity of Natural Religion. To it one adds a mingling and elements of his own, and forthwith arises Judaism; another brings to the same his own store of somewhat, and then is made Christianity; the other to the same simplicity conveys his quantum of another somewhat, his own addition, and lo! appears Mohammedanism. Each one of them makes his own faith, bearing a special name,

by adding something to that common faith of them which is Natural Religion.

Now, when we look at these additions together, we see two noteworthy things about them all. The first is that they all are historical. It might be looked for beforehand perhaps, that the additions would be new and peculiar doctrines or thoughts joined by each of the three speakers to the common thoughts of Natural Religion, and that by these special thoughts or views the special religion would be made and marked; or at least that some one of the three conversers would add doctrines or thoughts to evoke by them his own faith. But no. All that is of pure thought and ideality they already have agreed on together; it is in the substance of the one religion of them all, Natural Religion. All that either of them adds is *historical*, either certain events in some place and time, or else also with these events doctrines or thoughts growing from the events and hanging on them. Thus to the fund of thought which is Natural Religion the Jew adds the history of Moses, and the Law which rests thereon, the history of the Patriarchs, of the people of Israel, the Prophets, the Scriptures which record all these, and the Doctrines, Commands, Ordinances of Worship which are mingled with all these sacred annals. With this historical addition, the Natural Religion has become Judaism. To the same Natural Religion the Christian adds the life and teachings of Jesus, the preaching of the apostles, the journeys of Paul, and thoughts or Doctrines which came to being or awoke to higher life by reason of those events. With this addition the body of Natural Religion has become the form and stature of Christianity. To this same body of Natural Religion the Moslem adds the history of Mahomet, the story of the revelations given to him, the signs that bore witness to him, and the Doctrines, ideas, commands, communications therefrom in the Scriptures of the Koran. With this addition the Natural Religion has put on the countenance and garments of Islam. Thus it is to be noted first that all the increments by which severally Natural Religion is made into Judaism or Christianity or Islam, or whatsoever other faith, are *historical* adjuncts, or with these also certain augments of ideas or Doctrines which hang on the historical increments; but *always historical*, which is to say, concerned with some particular events at some time and place.

The second thing to be noted touching the addition by each of the believers, by which he brings Natural Religion to be his own special faith, is that the historical increment always becomes more sacred and affecting to the people adding it than the simple-great thoughts themselves, the foundation-truths which are Natural Religion. 'Tis not Natural Religion which lifts and sways the soul of the Jew with rapture; it is what Moses and the Prophets did and said. Not Natural Religion moves the spirit of the Christian by the Angelus, or brings him to his knees on the stones of cloisters with ecstacy; it is the Virgin Mother, the Christ-child, the Transfiguration, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension. Is it Natural Religion which swells the heart of the Moslem and prostrates him at the call of the Muezzin? No, not this, but Mahomet, Mecca and the Koran. I deny not (as, to the glory and virtue of the religious nature in us be it said, who could?) that the simple and grand thoughts of Natural Religion do underly and upbear all the historical augment, and if there were no simple religious depth by nature there could be no historical religion—I gainsay not this; but I say that for a long time, even for many ages, it is the historical increment which most is in the mind of the believers and is most glorifying and affecting to them; and this so much is so that often it is seen Religion seems to them to hang on the history rather than the history on Religion.

Now if we ask *why* it is that the historical part gains this over-power and so affects and flames up in the soul above the simple spiritual part which is Natural Religion, there are many reasons and causes, such as:

Patriotism, pride and love of country or race. For it is to be noted in history that for long ages patriotism and religion are the two greatest moulding forces in human association, and that they lie very close together. Now the historical part of a religion is that portion of it which feeds the pride of race and love of country; for commonly it is conceived as a revelation, favor, adoption vouchsafed from Heaven to that people only and thereby glorifying them. Hence the historical part is seized on passionately by patriotic feeling.

Again, the people turn to the historical addition rather than to the pure and spiritual conceptions because of the need of the

mind (and this the more in primitive or untutored conditions) to hang on pictures or symbols, or to aid thought and feeling by external means, by reference to times, places, persons, names, images, ceremonies. The mind is long and slow in journeying before it comes to the power of resting joyfully with *thoughts*, filled and fed with that rare atmosphere of the spirit. Men must have pictures, symbols, a visible region, a time, a history.

Again, personal force has no little share in the affectingness of the historical increment in religion. For the chief person in the history, the prophet who brings to pass the events or round whom they gather, always is a great and strong person, often very glorious, and his followers who join to make the history are notable and forcible persons also. Hence there is a very strong stream of personal power, of mighty character, in the historical part, and before it the soul of the people bows and is moved deeply.

Again, to this power and greatness of the persons comes Time to do its peculiar magnifying and hallowing. For if the founders and actors of the historical part seemed grand, inspired, divine to those who lived in the same time with them, much more seem they mighty and heavenly to the people who come after, beholding the great persons behind songs and praises, in the magnifications of time, in the mysterious clouds of ages. Wherefore mere lapse of time helps the power of the persons, the pictures, symbols, events, stories which make the historical augment in religion.

Again, the historical part of a religion always is hung with crystals of miracles. Not only the mighty persons themselves are impressive and affecting, and not only has time glorified them, but clouds of transfiguration, portents, wonders and signs, overshadow them. Stories of the marvels worked by them by the miraculous power of their words, or wrought around them by divine favor, by angels and bright visions, spirits and powers, gather around them and shine like halos and splendors, or are awful and terrible. The effect of these stories is very great, for the desire for the marvelous and portentous is very quick in primitive and untaught men. Therefore in religion the historical part, which always is full of miracles, has been precious and sacred to the people.

Again, the historical addition in religion creates an institution, a priesthood. Priests arise not for the spiritual things of Natural Religion, but for the signs, commands, ceremonies, attractions, threats, authority of the great persons and events which form the historical part. Therefore all the power of priests, which is very great, is turned to make large and hold long the reverence of the people for the historical portion in their faith; and this they are able to do effectively.

These and still other reasons, all of which deserve unfolding at length to show the potency of them, make the historical augment in religion more moving and sacred to the people for many ages, as I have said, than the unmingled spiritual things of Natural Religion. But now among these reasons there is one, not yet mentioned, which is a very honorable reason, springing from the most excellent reverence of the human soul, and strong with the very truth of Natural Religion itself. On this one reason I will ask you to dwell with me particularly.

This reason is the following: that the historical additions mark and accompany a great advance and outbreak of Natural Religion itself. They arise at the moment, and by reason, of a great growth, a step onward, a new forthcoming of spiritual life. "In the fullness of time"—for so it always is, partly because the time makes the man, partly because the man makes the time, and they so work together that they are as one, involved in each other, and that all is done at the very moment which is prepared and ready—"in the fullness of time" arises a teacher, "a voice crying in the wilderness," and the cry always is the same, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare it anew, make it straight in the desert." The teacher cries aloud once more the ancient thoughts, God, Worship, Duty. These thoughts he has of men. They are spoken all around him. They run far back. But he adds to them *something out of himself*, a new fervor, a fresh spirituality, an important stress on some element of them, a step onward in those changes through which they must pass in their slow journey unto simplicity and perfectness. At first men hang only on the teacher's words, his teachings, the new life and deep unfolding which he gives to the old thoughts. But after a time, these teachings seem so great, they so affect the people, and he who has poured such a flood

from his soul and so awaked the ancient things seems so great and divine, that the people begin to hang on the teacher more than on the things he has taught, and when he slips far away into the past they hang on him the more, and remember, sing, adore what he was and did. Thus the teacher himself becomes a historical addition to religion; reverence and adoration of him mingle with the ancient truths to make a new form of religion, a historical religion; a new faith sets out from him with a new name. But this is because his advent and "voice in the wilderness" marked a new refreshment of the spirit, a springing of the ancient truths to a great life, an unfolding of their power more than was conceived, an outpouring and breaking forth of Natural Religion; and often the teacher lays hold mightily of some great thought or advance in religion which never ceases to light up the earth. This is why men, in their gratefulness and love, hang about him and fall to a manner of worship of him, and make the history of him a part of their religion; whence it is that all faiths show themselves to be simple Natural Religion with a historical increment; but the adoration and love for the historical part is, *in origin*, only another form of man's true love and worship in the simplicity of the Natural Religion.

Surely here is a very excellent reason, very honorable to the spirit of man, why the historical addition becomes so adorable, glorious and sacred to the believer of any faith; it affects him even above the Natural Religion of his faith because it marks a high advance of that Natural Religion and a heavenly outbreak of the spirit; and this burst of light, sublime, spiritual, it invests with visible forms and pictures, heroic events, holy persons and grand discourses of them.

To illustrate this, no more is needed than to recount the beginnings of the historical faiths:

Zarathustra found the ancient Persians (so we may trace, or divine or surmise) divided in worship of many gods. This he did away, and collected all into adoration of one God, whom he called Ahuramazda, which means the "Living Lord who is Creator of all"; and the people gathered to the thought and worshiped the One Life and Light under the symbol of a holy fire, with hymns and prayers which are very beautiful and sublime, to be found in the great Zend Scriptures. This was a

great advance of Natural Religion under the name and holy zeal of Zarathustra; wherefore they of that faith hold him very sacred and venerate even above reason the Scriptures that came of his preaching and power.

Moses' great work was like to that of Zarathustra. He found the Hebrew tribes paying homage to many deities, very likely each tribe most to some tutelar deity of its own. Moses chose among them one grand and austere deity, named Jahveh (or Yahweh), whose character was holy and severe, and him Moses proclaimed the One Most High and Holy Lord, "beside whom there was none else," to be worshiped with "clean hands and a pure heart," according to an ethical inspiration called the Ten Words or Ten Commandments; and after many generations and terrible sublime struggles, this One Supreme Lord, this high thought of God, much ennobled during the long conflict, prevailed and filled the Hebrew Spirit. This was a great orth-pouring of Natural Religion; wherefore Moses and the Scriptures that gathered to him, in whose name the advance was famed, became very affecting and sacred to the Jews, and even overcame all reason and fact, so hallowed did the people makeit.

Christianity arose in a protest of spirit against form. The Jewish hallowing of Moses and of the ceremonies and traditions that hung on his name, became an intense formalism from which the life wasted away. Jesus arose and cried aloud once more for the life above the form. "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raimant?" said he. This principle with many applications pervaded his teaching. It was his one great burden, his perpetual "voice crying in the wilderness." Not the traditions but the private heart! said he; not the elders, nor even Moses, but your own soul—there are the fountains of authority, the "sources of astonishment and power"; not any time nor place, nor ceremony, tradition, rite, is needful to worship, but only the pure adoring spirit in the heart. Thus the veneration of Moses, which came to pass because of an outburst of the light of Natural Religion under his name, had become such a narrowness of sympathy and of rite, such a fury of zeal, that Natural Religion could hold its way only by dethroning the history which was elevated by a former glorious advance of Re-

ligion. This was the work of Jesus. His simplicity was a direct return once more to Nature and to God, an outbreak of the spirit. Therefore his name, and the discourses, events, stories, Scriptures which came of him or grew around him, drew to themselves a vast reverence, and men fastened with adoration on the history which was the visible body of such a spiritual benefaction; so that the hallowed history became dearer and more affecting to men than the Natural Religion which first had hallowed the history, and has continued so throughout Christendom to this hour.

Buddhism, so far as we may apprehend dimly that gigantic movement in illumined shadow, which exists in "a cloud of transfiguration," followed a like course with these other faiths. Some persons have denied the existence of Buddha, called also Gautama, Sakya-Muni, Siddartha, saying that these were but names for a vast movement of faith among the people of India. But there must have been a mighty person in that great awakening, of whom those names preserve remembrance. He led the people away from caste, from divisions and from priestliness, from Brahma and other deities of the Hindu religion to a purer thought of what is divine, from gods to God. Here therefore was a great advance of Natural Religion, both in divinity of worship and in humane love. At first Siddartha's preaching failed; but at last many were awakened, multitudes were drawn to him. After he died, very little is known for a hundred years of the religion which hangs on his name, and it nearly vanished from India, which still has little of it, though being its birthplace; but it spread widely to other regions, till now it has embraced one-third of the human race. And again, as in other faiths, it is on the pictorial, the heroic events, the history, that the believers have fastened. Buddha himself became such a centre of Divinity as Brahma had been before, and all manner of stories, wondrous miracles and mysteries, very abundant, were deposited in the history like dew from a humid air on ground made ready. This happened, as in the other faiths it did, because a great bursting-forth of Natural Religion converged the people's minds with awe and love to the historical events of it, and created other pictorial traditions, that the people might rejoice the more by vivid images.

With Islam, the youngest of the great world-faiths, the record is the same. Arabia was peopled with many tribes and many gods. Mahomet arose, and before that light in the east the troops of gods fled away, as Milton pictures the flight of the old mythical deities at the birth of Jesus—Appollo, "with hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving," "Peor and Baalim" forsaking their dim temples, and "sullen Molock," and

> "The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
> Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste."

Mahomet received the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, Moses and Jesus, but he said that he was raised up for the final revelation, the last and chief of all prophets. He proclaimed One Infinite Eternal Presence, One God, One Life; he sung many hymns, prayers and commands which became great Scriptures to the people; and all this he did, as always it is done, in the right and by authority of his own soul, not hanging on any other name, nor deriving from the past, but preaching and commanding in the name of the Living Present. Here was a forth-breaking of Natural Religion, which has come down in the watch-cry of the faith, "There is no god but God and Mahomet is his prophet." But again it is on the latter part of this watch-cry, on the historical part, that "Mahomet is the prophet," on this it is that the people have fastened their awe, their passion of belief. Mahomet's words, writings, deliveries, rhapsodies, are to them absolute and divine. They have a vast awe of the writings and bend to them—to them, the historical, visible part. And by brooding on the history they have become very fierce and fanatical,—foes to all who adore not the same history, how much soever they have the same Natural Religion with them. And yet this they do in truth because of the power in them of that same Natural Religion; for they cling to the history and are fierce for it because, in very truth, it was the occasion or attendant of an advance of the religion of the spirit up from a lower form and out of the bondage of another history.

Now, if I have conceived truly and spoken clearly, I have set forth Natural Religion in one way of viewing it, and also in some measure one way of the growth of it, thus:

1. The few grand and simple thoughts *in which all the different faiths agree* may be called Natural Religion.

2. To these simple and exalted thoughts each faith *adds something* which confers on the faith peculiar identity and its distinction from Natural Religion, and from all other faiths.

3. This addition always is *historical*, which is to say, events and persons.

4. This addition always becomes *more sacred and affecting to the people adding it* than the simple-grand truths which are wholly spiritual and universal.

5. There are *many reasons* why the historical part becomes so hallowed and affecting to the people.

6. But there is one very great and honorable reason, namely, that the historical additions are events and characters which *mark, occur with, or lead a great advance and epoch of Natural Religion*, and by reason of this fact it is that they become so mighty, hallowed and awful in the people's thoughts.

7. That by reason of the historical part becoming so sacred and awful, *what at first was a spiritual forth-breaking becomes absorbed in a mere history and externality.*

8. Thereupon, after a time, a new prophet is needed, and arises, to bring forth religion once more from the history into *the simplicity of the spirit and the authority of the soul.*

If these things have been said plainly, the discourse has attained its purpose and may end. Let it be added only that this view of Natural Religion and of one way or law of the unfolding of it among men, will breed some reflection in us, if we be wise; and gentle behavior, with charitable carefulness, will follow. We shall observe that it is easy for the Jew, the Christian and the Moslem to understand and delight in each other in discoursing of Natural Religion, which is the common ground of them; but it is hard for any one of them to enter into another's historical additions and conceive how they affect the other and how they seem so great, glorious or awful. Nay, the same history that to one seems divine will seem to another but lowly human, and even grotesque very like. So that the religions and sects understand not each other, and the earth hath this strange and sorry spectacle, namely, the different religions or sects falling on each other with wars and cruelties because they

differ in their historical additions to the simplicity of pure Religion in which they all agree. Surely here is a sight to touch the heart with anxiety, with fear, with self-watchfulness, with thoughts of brotherhood.

Moreover, if they of one faith find it so hard to enter into the mind of another faith, can each one be sure that he truly has conceived the inner life of his own faith and entered into it? Surely not always. As the peoples give themselves to the outward additions, the historical part, more than to the simple beauty of the spiritual, so any one may dwell on the poorer portion of even the historical part, leaning him and hanging his thoughts on prodigies, strange happenings or stories, appearances, spectacles, shows of external power; thereby passing by blindly the sublime character, the noble elevation of soul, the divine tenderness, lowly simpleness, patient fervor, which shine in the history, in the great person of it.

Let us be modest and careful; examine ourselves, look well after any bias, rise above the historical part unto simple Natural Religion, but be affectionate to those who still sit in the historical. Let us "covet for ourselves earnestly the best gifts," which are freedom and understanding, and the spiritual conceived above the formal and historical; but let us take also the "still more excellent way," which is love, brotherhood—to "dwell together in unity."

NATURAL RELIGION.

"On three things stands the world, on Law, on Worship, and on Charity."
—Simon the Just.

This is the season of growth. Night dances her short hours in gossamer and leaves her crystal slippers on the grass. The birds drink dew; the flowers drink; then come nests and fruit. Under the rock the fern unrolls, and waves, lissom, up and down to the sky and the river. The roads are bordered with sun-dew, and over the white fragrant banks of it the golden dodder creeps. The splendid pine through its needles pours jets of aroma. Chestnut, grape and sassafras store in burr, berry and root the subtle flavors of air and rain. Millions of cells, like little harbors, ebb and flow with the tide of life. The oak lifts the currents high in air; racing up and down the stem, they build around it the wood-binding of another year. Or low on the soil in blue-eyed grass and maiden hair, the life-force makes seeds and spores in them to grow their memories in another summer. I but tell the things I see around me in this one zone; but other zones have other things, shapes and beings.

How long God waits for his gains! With what patience, while the earth grows, according to the image of it in him, all the summers and winters of millions of years; till on it, when rocks have crumbled to soil, cool waters flow, and plants spring, with healthful fruits, the mind of man comes forth, and the breath of the sky awakes him unto religion. For the heart of man, rooted beneath and growing upward and loving all around, has its law of growth, which is of God, and never broken. Religion dropped ready-made no more than delicate tree or still tenderer flower of this geologic time, or town or book or art of men.

Now the course or law of the growth of religion may be set forth in many ways; for many different elements occur and mingle in it; and accordingly as one sets forth from one or another element, he will state in different terms or ways the one fact of the growth of religion among men. But all the different terms and manners of statement describe only the one thing, religion, which is to be known only by all the descriptions of it together, as if different beholders were to describe a mountain from the east, north, west and south, and from many stations between the great cardinal points, and the mountain could be known in its wholeness only by all the descriptions of it. Already in other sermons foregoing I have spoken of Natural Religion, trying to unfold it from one thought or another, since from almost any thought one may go straight by reason to the heart of Natural Religion; for all thoughts lead to it, as in a garden all paths to the house for which the garden was made. In truth in all the discourses of this volume, by whatever titles called, I have been speaking only of Natural Religion, that the book might bear just this one burden; for I have naught else to teach, and no other religion than simple Natural Religion, because I am not immersed, nor can be, in Christianity, nor in any other historical faith. Again in this discourse I will follow the unfolding of Natural Religion from a thought or view of it by which I may state its law of unfolding thus: *Religion follows a growth from a selfish to an unselfish form.*

I will speak from a text taken from Simon the Just, the only Scribe or Rabbi of the Great Synagogue whose name has come down to us, from 450 years B. C. His words, as I have found them rendered are "On three things stands the world, on Law, on Worship, and on Charity." But this is not a truthful rendering of the meaning of the ancient Rabbi, at least to our modern understandings. It would be correct and plain to render, "On three things stands the world, on the Law, on the Temple Worship, and on Alms-giving." For this was the meaning of the venerable scribe. To him there was no law but *The* Law, the Mosaic Law, to him no sufficient rite but the service in the Temple, and beyond these the great virtue was alms-giving. Or thus I may express it, namely, that the ancient Rabbi divided the people into three classes,—first, the Rabbinical class, the

Teachers and Guardians of the Law, secondly, the Priestly class who conducted the sacrifices and service in the Temple, thirdly, the common people whose best function was no more than the giving of alms.

But although this was the antique scribe's meaning, and therein there is no fruit for us or for this present time, yet his words may be taken in a large meaning, full of instruction. Verily, in this large meaning of them, it is true that on Law, Worship, Charity, these three, the world stands. Unto them and by them Natural Religion unfolds. Now, for a little, let us go back even far beyond the ancient scribe, that we may follow the growth of Natural Religion unto these thoughts, Law, Worship, Charity, and then onward by means of them.

Religion has two stages or grades in its history, the selfish and the unselfish. From the selfish form, wherein Religion begins, it moves on into a pure and unselfish form. These stages or forms are very distinct; yet they shade into each other by delicate degrees; and the selfish stage itself has two forms or stages, also distinct, but also lapping and shading one over the other, the form of *fear*, which is first, and the form of *desire*, which follows. I will try now to draw briefly the outline of these two stages, and follow the logical steps, which are also the historical, by which the lower form grows up into the higher.

First, of the lower form. I have called this the selfish stage because the nature of it is that religion is a chase of advantage or enjoyment here or in the hereafter. This pursuit often becomes an intense selfishness which swallows up every other motive; whereupon, in its early form, it appears most violently in *fear*.

Mandeville remarks that "fear is an elder motive to religion than gratitude," because "an untaught man would never suspect that the same cause which he received good from would ever do him hurt; and evil, without doubt, will always gain his attention first." The savage state, which is the primitive state of humanity, does encounter benefits and good things in nature, yet the strange, monstrous and horrible engages his imagination above all, and his first gods will be those whose power he has to fear,

whose anger to propitiate. It is a common philosophy that the early condition of mankind has an analogy in childhood. The savage state is truly an *infancy*, marked by all the traits of childhood,—simplicity, inexperience, ignorance, naive imagination, credulity, excitability, fickleness. These agree together to surround primitive man with an atmosphere of the supernatural. His ignorance places him in a wilderness which is a tangle of things he understands not. His wonder or fear takes fire at every portentous accident. His credulous and quick imagination gives personal shapes to his surprises, and his inexperience leaves him unguarded by any notion of continuity or order. Hence he peoples all things with beings and powers, imps or angels, who are busy in his affairs and work magic around him.

Man at first is weak, poor, unarmed. He has no tools, and no natural weapons. His jaws are feeble, he has no claws, no tusks, he is not swift. Even if more civilized, yet still he is ignorant, has few arts, no science. Yet being such, he is in a world of startling things, frightful violences, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, floods, comets, eclipses, meteors, hurricanes, hail-storms, lightning, thunder. What account can he give of these things? Even yet we struggle with them; even now many wrestle vainly to combine them with religion. They occur so rarely that the uninstructed man can not make place for them in his common experience, yet so often that they keep him affrighted and must come from powers not far off, but very near and busy with his affairs; and they are so mighty or fearful that he is quelled by them. What can he conceive save that these terrible things come of powers by which he is beset? And thereupon, fear of these powers, and prostrations, prayers, cries, sacrifices, to appease them, will be his religion.

An intense realization of magical or miraculous agency all around him and busy with him, occupies the mind of uninstructed man. Therefrom comes a religion of fear and prostration. This is what we behold plentifully when we study any early records of religion.

Thus when a pestilence attacks the Greeks under the walls of Troy, Apollo is seen seated in the sky, shooting arrows at the Greeks; this causes the havoc; and the plague is not stayed

till they discover the cause of offense and appease the angry god. In like manner, throughout the classical myths, the gods continually are stirring up storms and earthquakes, opening chasms, raining fire, confusing the minds of unfavored persons, and fighting bodily in the battles of men to bring victory to their favorites. In like manner, in the Jewish scriptures, Jahveh covers the land with darkness and vermin, turns the waters to blood, kills all the first-born, overwhelms in the sea the enemies of his chosen people, casts down the walls of hostile cities, destroys rebel towns with fire, and turns a woman into a pillar of salt for looking back at the spectacle. Likewise, in the Christian scriptures, God covers the earth with darkness, rends the temple veil and raises the dead from their tombs at the crucifixion of Jesus; stills at a word the roaring storm; speaks articulately from the sky; assists the apostles in fishing; makes Jesus invisible when the people wished to kill him, and was ready at a word from the Christ to supply legions of angels around him. According, also, to the pagans of the first Christian centuries, all the sufferings of that time were wrought by the gods in anger at the Christians, and at every fresh evil the Christians were persecuted to appease the wrath of the heathen deities.

In like manner, throughout mediæval history, this form of thought ruled. The displeasure of God with individuals, and even nations, continually was manifested in calamitous events. In the early centuries the Christians retorted curiously on the pagans. They agreed that many evils which fell on themselves were the works of the heathen deities; but they said these deities were demons furious with the worshipers of the true God.

Now this notion of powers supernatural, magical, often capricious, sometimes even vengeful or impish, busy with human affairs and close besetting, this notion, which springs of the fears that attend ignorance, reacts severely on the terror, continually increasing it, and thereupon the increased terror multiplies again the invisible fickle spirits or gods who swarm about men, until a vast and agonizing fear has been caused. In very fact there has been produced such a condition of religious terror and despair as now we hardly can imagine to ourselves. It was so in the Middle Ages. I mean the sufferings caused by the con-

ceptions of hell, the Devil, and his minions.* With this we find—and always it is so—the good and kindly powers even as much magical, necromantic, miraculous, which is the same as to say capricious, as little conceived under forms of order, as the malicious and evil powers. Miracles abounded everywhere worked by God through the words of living saints or by their relics after they had died. This connection is inevitable. Never anywhere will be found magical wonder-working imps without also a deity of miracle and caprice, arbitrarily issuing and changing his will, sometimes one way, sometimes another, repenting him of one course to begin another, and all with marvels and signs breaking forth from quiet Nature; and never will be found these miracles and portentous works conceived of a good deity but also there will a "reign of terror" by the magical invisible powers of bad angels and demons. For selfish hopes of heavenly marvels, and terrors, whether toward God or toward devils, are overthrown only by the conception of ORDER.

Of this thought, ORDER, I will speak very soon. But now I have to note a change which has come over religion, from this terrible honest fear to an easy insincere desire. For when men fear so painfully, 'tis sure they believe very honestly and

* The medieval terror, consternation, agonies, aroused by these images, can be known truly only by a detailed study of those times. "The agonies of hell," says Lecky, in his History of Rationalism, "seemed then the central fact of religion, and the perpetual subject of the thoughts of men. The whole intellect of Europe was employed in illustrating them. All literature, all painting, all eloquence was concentrated upon the same dreadful theme By the pen of Dante and by the pencil of Orcagna, by the pictures that crowded every church, and the sermons that rang from every pulpit, the maddening terror was sustained. The saint was often permitted to behold in visions the agonies of the lost, and to recount the spectacle he had witnessed. He loved to tell how, by the lurid glare of the eternal flames, he had seen millions writhing in every form of ghastly suffering, * * * tortured by pangs that seemed ever keener by the recurrence and shrieking in vain for mercy to an unpitying heaven. Hideous beings of dreadful aspect and of fantastic forms hovered around, mocking them amid their torments, casting them into cauldrons of boiling brimstone, or inventing more tortures more subtle and more refined. * * * Sometimes it was said the flames, while retaining their intensity, withheld their light. A shroud of darkness covered the scene, but a ceaseless shriek of anguish attested the agonies that were below. * * * We can never conceive the intense vividness with which these conceptions were realized; or the madness and the misery they produced. For those were ages of implicit and unfaltering credulity; they were ages when none of the distractions of the present day divided the intellect, and when theology was the single focus upon which the imagination was concentrated." I refer to this painful subject, omitting some of the historian's most painful details, in order to show to what a horror of frenzy and misery religious terror may be carried.

intensely, and speak no vagrant, wanton, loose, easy syllables, but mean what they say and truly realize it in the heart.

At last, slowly, as it is with mental changes, the first form of religion, the form of fear in the selfish stage, passes away. Or mayhap it is more true to say that the fear-form declines, is obscured, becomes inoperative, though long lingering in a degree, especially if some weakness or sickness befall a man, or if a plague fall on a people. But, however, whether it pass utterly or suffer abeyance, the form of fear is followed by the form of *desire*. Desire is the second form of religion in the selfish stage of it. Fear wanes with the increase of knowledge. Science does away with barbarous terrors. Religion, therefore, being no longer pricked with misfortunes and pains to be escaped, yet being selfish still, has naught to turn on but advantage or pleasures to be gained. Desire then has succeeded to fear. I know not that this change is an advance; at least, I suspect there is a loss of sincerity and earnestness, whatever other good quality may be gained. For though fear be the elder motive to religion and more forcible than gratitude or hope, yet it is plain that always there must be desires mingled with the fears. What tortures or disasters men fear with such anguish, they must desire to escape. The horrors of hell, or earthly misfortunes and losses, will be put in contrast with the bliss of heaven. Images of sufferings will be both deepened by pictures of pleasures and assuaged by the hope of them. The delights which balance pains will be material or spiritual, noble or ignoble, as the pains may be. Therefore the Moslem faith, which has as many and frightful horrors of a material hell as any religion has, looks also to great ravishments of equally bodily pleasures; and though the Christian heaven has been conceived not so pampered, yet it is a most inglorious ease, an idleness of singing and resting, a lounging with crowns and harps, which has in it the very mortality of physical and spiritual gluttony. The middle ages of Christianity were not lacking in imagination of the felicities of the elect; nay, the sight of the pangs in the pit were to whet the pleasures of the redeemed. Fear is a passion so terrible that it overflowed the desires even opposite it, and covered society with its own turbulent dark waters. But still, men saw in the heavens, how much soever with despair, the happy city. A faint hope of

heaven was a portion of the anguish of the fear of hell. Therefore I say I know not that when men outgrew the fear, but their religion still lay prone in desires, they had come to more elevation, for it seems belike that they lost in sincerity, in intense reality of believing; and being still selfish, pursuing pleasures for themselves by means of religion, what elevation was there, what ennoblement? To be still self-seeking but less in earnest, is not elevation. Scientifically men had advanced; they had more knowledge, by reason of which they were lifted out of fears; they were more rational, cautious, critical, less credulous; but, while they professed the same belief as before, and uttered the words of it volubly, they lost in truthfulness, feeling and fervor. For if the religion of desire, as now we hear it taught, setting forth salvation and heavenly dwellings for the objects of religion, —if this were intense, deep, sincere, moving and all real to the soul, like that of the middle ages, could it exist without an opposite intense fear of hell? Therefore it seems to me that the disappearance of fear while desire remains so asserted and preached up, is more than a disappearance of fear; likewise it is a decline of fervor, a dominance of the letter, assent, without conviction or conscience. Surely it has an ill look, and very significant, in the popular religion that so much it is based on salvation, while yet no one shows any fears of hell, or at most has some concern for his neighbor. For this is still to make religion a selfishness, while it has not the excuse of being terrified, no, nor the fervor nor the honesty of the terror. These seem severe words, and I like not to seem severe nor to judge in such a manner; but I am constrained to the words. For the mind of the age seems to me to have disowned the church of it, and the salvation-religion or desire-religion which is taught therein; whence it happens that some persons repeat the old words and even rally to them if they be attacked, without knowing that really they believe them not; because fervor and reality in religion so waned when the ancient fears fled, but the old desires that were with the fears, but weaker, still held religion in a pale selfishness; and other persons repeat the old words, and walk in the paths and companies of them, suspecting shrewdly that all fervor and reality is gone, or even knowing well enough that they believe not the words which they utter, not able to be

true, either unto the old doctrine, or to thought, to take it up bravely and candidly.

But the religion of self-centred desires shall wane, is waning. At last, when both the reality of fear and the pretensions of the salvation-creed pass away, then the selfish stage ends. Terror makes way for faith and trust; aspiration takes the place of desire; the unselfishness of pure religion, grown unto its true stature, begins. The morning dawns. The glimmer comes, faint it may be, a mere ray in the east yet, but prophetic. "The jocund day stands tiptoe on the misty mountain top"; the gleam of his eye is LAW.

LAW—this is the first of the three radiations or thoughts on which Rabbi Simon the Just says the world stands.

Gradually knowledge grows. The number of things that can be explained increases, and after a time increases swiftly. One thing is compared with another, and common likenesses are discovered which run through many things, divide them into groups, and are *laws* of the action or nature of the things. Men learn to expect explanation of all things, and to wait for it, in accordance with regular and unwavering method or *law*. The taste or passion for the magical or miraculous dwindles. The supernatural, arbitrary, portentous, yield to the idea of LAW, or universal and immutable ORDER. When this idea is discovered, seized, loved, then miracles, signs, portents, the magical, the ghostly, seem not only untrue, unproved, unprovable, but uncomely, repulsive, nay, as it were, intrusive and impudent. No amount of reputed evidence can hold them in place. Who knows not, if at all he has attended to the matter, that a thousand times more evidence, and better, is to be had for the magic of witchcraft and the miracles of medieval saints than for the marvels of the Jewish Scriptures, or of the Christian? Nay, these magical stories of saints and imps were believed for many centuries very passionately, with an intense realization in comparison wherewith a Christian's belief in the Scripture-wonders is as nothing. Yet they have passed and gone. They have gone quietly. They have stolen away. It was not through argument. They were not debated down. They simply disappeared before the rising sense of LAW and ORDER. With them the wonders of the Old Testament may be laid away tenderly without much

offence; and every one who has studied of it in freedom and rationally, understanding the mental processes of this day, perceives that the miracles of the Gospels soon will follow; or if not soon, yet follow; it is but a question of time. The mind shrinks from them; and properly. For the idea of Order has arisen, divine Order. This claims the mind's whole homage and ardor. We see in nature no more of caprice, no longer a drift of miracles, a play of magic, but symmetry, beautiful unity, serene, unbroken Order reigning everywhere, peace, power, perfectness; a progressive order wherein truth and goodness triumph, the everlasting incarnation of God.

Before the thought of Order all fear takes flight. How can there be room for terror? Is not man of the Order, and in it? What can await him hereafter which is not also part thereof, adapted to him, agreeing with his nature no less than making his destiny, accordant with his being and the right and due aim of the creation of him? To be part of a perfect Order is to be as safe at all times as at any time; for at what time can anything befall us which is not *fitted unto us* and engrafted in the *nature of all things*. "The moment the idea of Order is conceived," says a philosopher,* "reason feels for it a sympathy so profound, true, immediate, that she bows down herself before it, recognizes its consecrated and supreme right of control, adores it as a legitimate sovereign, honors it, and submits to it as the natural and eternal law. * * * This idea, this law, gives light and strength, by showing us that the end of each being is an element of universal Order; it communicates to these ends, and to the instinctive tendencies of all beings a respectable and sacred character, which they had not before. * * * Good, true good, good in itself, absolute good, is the realization of the absolute end of the creation—is universal Order. The end of each element of creation, i. e., of each being, is one element of the absolute end. Each being aspires towards this absolute end in seeking its own peculiar end, and this universal aspiration is the universal life of creation. The realization of the end of each being is then an element of the realization of the end of creation, that is to say, of universal Order. The good of each being is a fragment of absolute good. It is on this account that the good of each being

* Jouffroy.

is really a good. Thence comes its character. And as absolute good is worthy of all reverence, and sacred in the eyes of reason, so the good of each being—the realization of its end—the accomplishment of its destiny—the development of its nature—the satisfaction of its tendencies, which are all identical, become equally sacred and worthy of reverence."

Thus from knowledge, from the looking at things much and long till they show us their likenesses, their places together, their groupings, arises the idea of Law, Order; which means the unity or unwavering action in Nature, wherein is no chance and no miracle, but a steadiness and perfectness of unfolding in one manner and with one course. This is the first thought on which the Rabbi says the world stands. Now, when the conception of Law, Order, is attained, understood, taken into the heart, then comes Worship, which is the second thought on which the Rabbi perceives the world to stand. With the conception of Order, the purity of true Worship comes forth. For now we have entered on the unselfish and pure form of religion. In the selfish stage, beginning in fear and continuing into desires which, albeit weakly, survive the fears, when men are harried with frights, superstitions, conceptions of arbitrary powers good and evil busy with human affairs and working spells,—in this stage of religion, fear and desire drive men to such praying and imploration as is supple beggary, a priestly canvassing and dunning of the heavens in which, however men cry to the Deity, and fear him, they adore nothing but their own advantage. This is the time of altars, sacrifices, prostrations, propitiations. But in the unselfish stage of religion, when the conception of Order has chased fear out of being, and desire is changed, then fears and desires are followed by trust and adoration. It is the time of simplicity, spirituality, freedom, pure Worship. Men then are not disposed to *utter* so much praying; yet they are more prayerful. They will not be guilty at all of a miserable mendicancy, sueing for outward things, for pleasures, ambitions, riches, honors. But the heart will be filled with pure Worship, because God is, Eternal Goodness is. Men cast not themselves on the ground with cries and beating of breasts, but stand, and lift up the head with the glory of adoration. Not now being filled with clashing hopes, fears, wishes, about himself, his religion being no

longer a supplication or paying court for advantages to himself, but in truth the very forgetfulness of himself, what can man's life and religion be but a looking forth and up with wonder and joy, an inspiration unto the Eternal Life of God! And this is Worship, undefiled. Of this worship, joy, faith, which is prayerful but not begging, not suit-preferring nor petition-making, a poet speaks—

> Ere on my bed my limbs I lay,
> It hath not been my use to pray
> With moving lips or bended knees;
> But silently, by slow degrees,
> My spirit I to Love compose,
> In humble trust mine eyelids close,
> With reverential resignation,
> No wish conceived, no thought expressed!
> Only a *sense* of supplication,
> A sense o'er all my soul imprest,
> That I am weak, yet not unblest,
> Since in me, round me everywhere,
> Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

Four great thoughts grow around the conception of Order, which nourish Worship and raise it high with praise and joy. They are Beauty, Grandeur, Beneficent Providence, The Eternal One. I pray you go with me in a few words of each of these thoughts, that we may feel the more how much and surely Worship follows the conception of Order.

Beauty is an inhabitant of Order. Order is a very beautiful thing to the mind. Not only elevated and entitled to veneration intellectually, but very beautiful and affecting to the sense of what is fair and graceful. Confusion never can be Beauty. Nay, so true is this, that even an assembly of things every one of which is very beautiful will not be a beautiful assembly if the things be thrown together without order. In very deed, the disorder of them all would have a face so ugly that the beauty of every one thing would be lost in it. And even if there be arrangement, a marshalling and allotment of them, yet if this lack symmetry and proportion, or a steadiness toward one thought or aim, there is no Beauty. Conceive a face in which every feature should be in its due place, but no part matched with another, the two eyes of different sizes and colors, the nose of such largeness as would be enough for a giant and the mouth as small as would fit a fairy,—and there were no beauty therein, because in the arrangement there would be no real Order. For

Order is an arrangement with a mutual support among the parts and a meaning or drift of them all together as one thing. In like manner if a little child be beautiful, yet he is so only in his place in the Order which is growth and life; for if we think of an infant staying as he is and growing not, he is distressful, uncanny, unbeautiful. Thus Order which is life, motion, interplay of parts supporting each other, full of meaning to the mind, having one end which continually is followed, a good and gracious end visible indeed in the Order, the end being never obscured nor the Order disarrayed, no litter made in it, no second thoughts, no lumbering, no ferment, no mending—this Order is Beauty. When it hath taken hold of the mind that all Nature is such Order, with never a jumble nor repentance nor necromancy in it, no breaking of ranks in it, no invasion of it by Divine Power to make up for inversions or embroilments in it, but all one high array, one unswerving course, one convoying Order, then what a Beauty arises on us in all the visible creation, which we look on with a new rapture. There is no Beauty to the eye like that which hath also the mind's eye at it, when serene and perfect Order is known in nature and the beauty of it is felt in the soul. This beauty breaks on him who hath entered into the knowledge of Order. It never leaves him. It fills both eye and mind, and then riseth like a spring in his spirit unto Worship. Whether he look at a flower or at the forest, at a rill or at the ocean, at a lamp or at the stars, at earth or the heavens, 'tis all one; in them all is the one holy Order, and together they are perfect Beauty. How worshipful, how full of might to uplift, cheer, thrill and bless the soul is this sight of supreme Beauty! It is more than shapes and colors, than flowers and trees and gardens and fountains and landscapes, than mountains, continents, seas; it is all these brought into one, and never one of them seen but it hath a measure of the countenance of them all, by the one Life, Spirit, Law that is in them. What more can stir up worship in man than such knowledge of Beauty?

Another perception that attends Order is Grandeur. This follows hard on Beauty. I know not but they be twins of a birth, and flash from Order together. For such a vast Beauty as Order reveals is a kind of Grandeur itself, and there is no Grandeur but is beautiful. But when we lift our thoughts from

this Beauty to the Infinity of it, when from this trundling globe and its heavenly lamps, wherein Order is so beautiful, we survey by mind the invisible heavens, infinitely beyond sight, when we conceive the millions of spheres thereof which no doubt do sweep, invisibly to us, around the mighty suns whose flames no more than twinkle to us over those eternities of space, and when then we conceive that from the most far of those suns with his worlds about him break forth other firmaments and stars, and from the confines of them again others, without end and without beginning, and through all this the majesty and glory thereof is the same Order which here is Beauty and Peace, and never anywhere is it broken, but perfect throughout all, One Holy Order, One Power and Perfectness, Infinite, Eternal, "with no variableness neither shadow of turning," when this sublimity is thought of, then how doth worship awake, how doth it come out of sleep "like a strong man to run a race," how doth the soul sing with great psalms, for the joy and glory we have of this Infinite Eternal Sublimity in which we are naught, yet by knowing it, are caught up in an image and fellowship of it which is our being and bliss! And how also doth veneration arouse itself, and a grandeur is induced in our own souls, a forbidding and shaming of all littleness, of heat and whimpering and faithlessness! We cannot edge complaints and groans into this sublimity of Order. Murmurs, mutterings, bemoanings, brawlings, plaints, mutiny, petty willfulness, are shamed and silenced. 'Tis desecration to bring them to the holy presence of Order in Sublimity Eternal. We are stilled, rebuked, lifted up, chastened. This is Worship in the spirit.

Beneficent Providence is another thought which attends the conception of Order. It is most dear to the soul, and from all experience continually looks forth on the soul with a most pleasing and gracious face of majesty. From all experience I say Beneficent Providence looks forth. I mean from individual experience, our own and that of other persons around us, and from collective experience, which is the history of mankind. If we view the history of human kind, what a march doth it show! Not a mere motion or swaying, not a running to and fro and passing in and out, like a crowd agitated; but a steady march forward, like an army in motion. How many things in history

are very dim! What numbers of questions we cannot answer! How innumerable the years and the swarms of men! What a scroll of life reaching to "the morning stars," of which we can but decipher a few characters close to us! But over all the immensity, through all the distance, the multitudes, the clouds and questions, one thing is clear, nor is there any distance so dim but it shines therewith, namely, the irresistible gain of the good and recession of evil! Everywhere the good is victory and power; evil is weakness and failure. What is good lives; what is evil dies. "The stream of tendency" hath never a halt in it, but sets unto the good and away from the evil without ceasing. "All things work together" "to make a bad thing as if it had never been." Steadily move on the true things, the peaceable, the faithful and righteous, the things honest, just, pure, lovely, of good repute. They can not be stayed. The evil things, not honest, unjust, defiled, unlovely, of ill name, fall behind and are left. They can not come up. The triumph of goodness and prevailing of truth, the defeat of iniquity and disappearance of error, are in the ORDER, the LAW, and go on therein immutably. The Infinite ORDER which gathers the stars and earth into one thought and one manner of going forth, with all things in them, gathers also the moral universe of men into one thought and one manner of life, one aim and testimony. So is it very plainly to our view of the history of mankind. Now if also we look at our own individual experience, when or in whom was it ever any different? Every one finds that by good deeds he is made stable, strong, cheerful, full of life. He is walled about. He can not be shaken. He has no fears. If he have done right to-day, and spoken the truth, to-morrow or the next week or the next year must agree with what he has done and said this day. It is impossible that he should be shamed in it. "The very stones of the field are in league with him." To what he has done that is right, and to what he has spoken that is true he need not give a thought more or take any heed of it. It will agree with all that can follow, and will work mightily. It belongs in the holy Order, it is under all-mighty Law. Let any one examine, moreover, how wonderfully he is led, how perfectly the one Order suffuses all his affairs, his incomings and outgoings, how blended he is with all other persons and things into

one Kingdom which "man did not make and cannot mar," how things come trooping around him to work with him, to help, to show the way, to open the door, to shut it, to forbid, to bind, to set free, all being done in one supreme Order which at the same time is busy with every other person and creature and by its dealing with them is dealing thereby with him, and by what it opens or shuts to him is touching all others wondrously and conceiving for the whole and for every one in the whole,—all this in one ORDER, one LAW, overbrooding, infinite, eternal, in all and yet under all as the sea is in the waves and under them—let any one examine and know this! Then behold also how the same Order brings forth the beauty and light of human happiness—how full of joys homes are, what carolings heard, what comforts, successes, triumphs, arts, songs, loves, what a multitude of kinds of pleasure, what inexpressible joyful relations of heart to heart and life to life, what perception of beauty and what amazing beauty to feed the perception, what thrills of thought, what moral glories, what discoveries in the earth, the forces thereof, and the substances thereof, for it hath no end to the secrets of its bosom! Ah! I know well the sad things over against this radiance of happiness, the want, the pain, the needless cruelties, the hard lives. But I see two things also very plainly,—that the most and the worst of the miseries of man are made by man, and they need not be if he would not; and also that, with all the hard things, the happiness and enjoyment are more, as anyone may know if he will but count gratefully at their worth, or even count but to number, the flying instants of little satisfactions. And as to the first of these things which I see, namely, that men do make most their own miseries, which we can do because the divine Order includes our wills and not destroys them, I see a third thing very plainly, that the Order so moulds and guides us, and hath a will surrounding ours in such heavenly manner, that the happiness is growing greater and the wretchedness less, that never there was so much health and hope and pleasures as now, nor so widely spread among great numbers of men, and that this is the ORDER and the LAW of God. And when this is seen, this Beneficence of Providence, this triumph which is Peace, Truth and Right, this ORDER which is Love, must not praise follow? Can song

be dumb? Must not Worship arise—because "he hath beset us behind and before and laid his hand upon us"? Surely unto this meaning of Order, this Love in Law, adoration will hasten forth even as a child runs to his mother.

Again—to come to the fourth of the great thoughts which I have said attend the conception of Order—the knowledge of Order rouses Worship because it leads straight to God. If all things contain the image or impress or effluence of God, which is but to say that they come of him, then we may be very sure that we shall have knowledge of God if we find the points in which things resemble each other. This is what we name the beholding of the One in the Many. It is the perception of the nature and image of the One Source in all the manifold creations. This is so great a joy, so quickening to the spirit, that Emerson has said that to generalize which is simply to set forth the resemblances of things, to find in a host of objects a unity of ideal, to discern the One in the Many,—this, says Emerson, is to receive an influx of Deity, and "hence the thrill that attends it."

The conception of Law, of Order, refers both to action and to form. As to action, it means that under the same conditions the same motions, actions, results, will follow uniformly. Thus the sun, the moon, the planets, the earth, move continually as always they have moved, the chemical affinities show themselves always in one manner, and all the effects of light, the manner of vibration of sounds, of heat rays, the mass-motions of which mechanics take notice, which retreat into invisible molecular pulsings, followed thereinto by science with experiment, reasoning and speculation,—all these act uniformly, always the same under same conditions, with no failure nor caprice nor chance. However we observe, however we try and test, it is no matter, always there is one way of action, never overthrown. Try as many things as you will, each one leads you straight to the uniform mode of its agency, till every substance, every pulsation of things, seems a syllabication, declaring One, One, One, One, like the beat of a rhythm, unceasing. To perceive this, to be affected by it and enter truly into the heart of it, is to know of God, the eternal One, to look on the countenance of Divinity, Reason, Perfectness, the same yesterday, to-day and

forever, "as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, worlds without end."

But the conception of Order includes not only action but form. Order in form means the persistent resemblances which assemble objects into groups, and these groups into larger groups, keeping them distinct from each other: for example, the resemblances or common traits which mark objects of the mineral kingdom, and again those which define the vegetable kingdom, and those again which denote members of the kingdom of animals; or again for example, the resemblances which mark several trees as apple trees, and again the wider but fewer common traits which collect apples and pears in one group; the marks which assemble several bushes into a group as rose-bushes, and the wider but fewer marks in common which gather roses, strawberries, raspberries into a group; the common likenesses which mark several trees or shrubs as plums, and the wider but fewer marks which bring together plums, cherries, apricots in one group; and finally the wider but fewer resemblances which connect all these groups, assembling apples, pears, roses, strawberries, raspberries, plums, cherries, apricots, in a large family of plants, all bearing a family likeness, which is to say, a number of uniform marks or traits of structure, and called the Rose Family. Very beautiful and delicate to the eye of loving study are these likenesses, types, ideals, common thoughts, which run like a stream of spiritual unity, like the blood of a pure race, through many kinds and countless individuals of plants, assembling them into these mystical kinships.

And what is this unity but the appearance of God unto us? Wherever we come on a unity, which is to say, a collection of many things under one thought, there we behold the One in the Many, who is God. There we look on the face of God. Again and again I recur joyfully to the Zoroastrian words about God, "Him whom I exalt with my praise I now *see with my eye*, knowing him to be God, the reality of the good thought, the good word, the good deed." Him whom I now *see with my eye?* Yes, verily. Look I not with my eye on the very shapes of the mystical kinships of plants, animals, all creatures? We can go no road of unity but straightway we stop in God. What is this creature beside me? He is a visible man. And what is a

visible man? He is an animal. And what is an animal? He is one of an immense concourse of creatures who have life. And what is life? Life is One, Eternal, Divine, the Being of God. What is this other creature beside me? It is a rose. And what is a rose? A plant. And what is a plant? A plant also is one of an immense concourse of living beings. And what is life? It is the Being of God. What is this other creature beside me? It is a grain of sand, Hath it any shape? It is a crystal of silex. And what is silex? It is a mineral. And what is a mineral? It is one of a vast concourse of things which have existence, but no life apparent to us. And what is existence? It is the Being, the Presence, Power, Appearance of God. Thus with anything, go but a little way with it in its likeness to other things, and you come soon to be stayed in God.

Unto this perceiving and knowing of God Worship arises. Praise and song, psalms, thanksgiving, adoration, Worship, are the utterances of us unto the One, over all and through all and in all, which is the holy Order of heaven and earth. Thus it is that Law and Order, which is the first thought on which Rabbi Simon the Just says the world stands, leads soon and straight to a pure Worship, the second thought on which the Rabbi establishes the world.

But there is a third thought on which the Rabbi says the world stands, namely, Charity, which is to say, a kind fellowship and broad love among men. This Charity follows on the conception of Order and the exalting of Worship. In many ways Order, which draws men to Worship, and Worship which draws men to God, do draw men close unto each other. And by this drawing together in Charity they come anew unto God in Worship; for well has it been written, "There have been occasions when I have felt that if others cared for me as I did for them, it would be, not so much a solace for loss, as an equivalent for it —a certain real thing in itself—a touching of absolute ground among all the changes of phenomena. * * In the mere clinging of human creatures to each other, * * I seem to touch the eternal."

Order in creation inclines men unto each other because it is so great a thought. Great thoughts draw men closer together than any other thing. Great interests may unite them com-

pactly, in plans and enterprises. Great discipline may make them stand together solidly and more as one body, facing anything. Common pleasures may collect them good-naturedly. Common dangers may make them run together for defense. Common sufferings may awake a sentiment of brotherhood in them. Great passions, of whatever kind, may cause them to utter one voice like a forest in a storm. But only great thoughts can draw men into a fellowship which at once is rapture, peace and power. Wherefore, because Order is a thought so grand and inspiring, it draws men together most wonderfully, and makes a beautiful front of them to face a creation made so fair to the mind. This fine front of men together is charity.

Again, the thought of Order and Law in all things makes Charity, freedom, wide fellowship, because Order shows plainly that truth advances by the reasoning together of men, not by violence to one another's bodies, nor by exclusions or partitions, but by their natural and free conversation; which is to say, by orderly unfolding, by the lessons of experience, by observation and experiment whereby knowledge is gained. And by such evolution the truth must advance, and can not be stopped, nor even hindered unless men hinder it by their blind furies with each other. When Order shows us plainly that we have not to take truth under our patronage or protection, to push forward one thing or another by violence and persecution, calling it truth, or by hating those who differ with us and drawing away from them; but that only we have to confer together in peace and good will and the truth will come forth more speedily, —when this is seen, men draw together closely by as much as they desire the truth, and a beautiful Charity obtains.

Again, the thought of Order induces humility of spirit; for it reveals a steady unfolding of knowledge, a progress, by a mighty Law. No man can do much to hinder this movement, however he may rage, slay, burn, banish. Neither can a man do much to help it on, save by a broad conference and conversation with his fellows in Charity; for the numerosity of ill conclusions in the past, the busy bevies of errors, show that if a man be very sure of himself he may be over-sure, and that if he strive to force forward any view of his own by other influence

than affectionate conversing about it, he may be but making of himself one more beast of burden straining ungainly to pull a stone-load of folly. Wherefore, how sturdy and noble soever may be a man's conviction that he hath a truth, the thought of the infinite truth-unfolding Order of God, which unmoved hath taken care of hosts of errors in which men have been stuck as fast as he in his own view, will teach him both humility and patience. By these virtues men will draw together and converse in Charity.

Moreover, again, these great thoughts make men too grand for strife. The mind grows in excellence, beauty, exaltation, like to the nature of the thoughts it feeds on. He who lives thoroughly with the thought of Order is seated above strife. He is not so much patient with disappointments, but rather they cannot reach up into his quiet. Not so much he endures the long periods of the moral creation, but rather he shares with them and is of a like mind, being lifted up by the wings of Law and Order to a share of the virtue of the Life of God, to whom a thousand years is as a day. Wherefore by these great thoughts men draw together because they become great like to the thoughts, too great to strive with one another, great enough for love.

Once more, again, as Order exalts Worship, so Worship exalts man to man and covers all creatures with a sanctity. When Worship hath come to pass, above sacrifices and implorations, when religion is an adoring spirit with no taint in it of self-seeking and of following after gain, then he who looks purely up unto Divine Life and Love will be reverent of every man who may do the same. Whosoever worships purely the unlimited Mercy, Holy Life, Power, will look with tender conscience and heart on all beings who are gathered with himself under the one heavens stretched out as a tent over all. Whosoever adores a Fatherhood will know that thereby all creatures are in a brotherhood. Wherefore pure Worship, which comes of Order, draws men together in Charity and comes quickly unto the love and unity of all souls.

The long sermon is ended. In these last thoughts of it, Natural Religion hath brought us to a blessedness of peace as well as to greatness of thoughts. There is no selfishness like to the

religious selfishness, no cruelty like to the creed-cruelty, inflaming men against each other in the name of Eternal Love, that each army conceives to be tender and saving unto them, yet will have them to slay the other army. But Natural Religion hath come to this, that "one soul is as precious as another," and no one hath virtue to decide on the nearness of any soul to God. Pure aspiration is the same thing evermore and the place of it is "holy ground," whatever altars be there of whatever name, or no altar palpable. We are in the holy Order of God, and cannot fear. We see in this Order "that truth is strong with the strength of the Almighty," and was never "put to the worse in a free and open encounter," and we need no swords for it. We come into a spiritual Worship, in which all men have the same part; whereby must be Charity; for who then can be cruel for a creed, or undo the brotherhood which cometh of the One Father of all?

Here is greatness of thought, and greatness of feeling, and greatness of joy!

In this sermon is another statement of Natural Religion. There are other modes of statement of it in other sermons in this volume. And Natural Religion has many statements, because it covers so vastly over human experience,—thought, uplook, joy, sorrow; and this is one statement of it, namely:

On three things stands the world, on Law, on Worship and on Charity.

AFTER-THOUGHTS AND READINGS.

Pp. 26-28. I take the following with admiration from William M. Salter:

"There is another characteristic of the moral life. Not only is it something more than good morals, but it is something more than good feelings, good instincts, generous impulses and the like. We also distinguish between actions done from conviction and those done from mere impulse. No one questions that it is an advantage to have good impulses; but they are not morality; and there is a trouble in dealing with an impulsive man which we are all sensible of—viz., that we can never be quite certain of him beforehand. It is charming to find our friend so ready and willing when he is in a good mood; but suppose something has crossed him—what a change! We say to ourselves we had better see him some other day. Now, with one actuated by principle the case is different. No one, perhaps, can absolutely prevent fits of depression overtaking him now and then; but one can say, "I will strive not to let them influence me so far as my action goes," and can with more or less of evenness and regularity do what he feels is duty. Now, it is what we thus do in accordance with some rule, or, as we say, on principle, that has, strictly speaking, moral worth; what we do at random, because we simply happen to be in the mood for it at the time, is without this distinction. The moral life, then, is the life within so far as we bring that life under some kind of a rule. So long as we let our thoughts and feelings take their natural course, being now attracted in this direction and now in that, yielding in turn to what is good and what is bad, being now just and now unjust, now generous and

now selfish, now truthful and now false, we have not really entered on the life of which I speak, or if we have entered, we have not gone farther than the threshold. * * * Good feelings are an advantage to any one, but it is a sorry mistake if one takes them for goodness; their true office is to lead us, to impel us toward goodness; but if we stop with them and are somehow satisfied with ourselves because we have them, our responsibility may be heavier than if we had been destitute of them altogether. You read some book or hear some one speak, or listen to some play with a noble motive or hear some music that awakens your better self, or look at some canvas that portrays a purity, a self-sacrifice, to which you are stranger, and your heart is touched and you experience a series of elevated and delightful emotions; but though these are all inward experiences, do not think that they are the moral life, or even a part of it, unless they nerve you to fresh allegiance to the aim you had perhaps momentarily forgotten or cause you to feel that you must begin to make such an aim dominant in your life. Morality is, after all, a matter of the will; there must be thought, there must be feeling; but unless these pour themselves into a choice and lead to a purpose, there is no morality, properly speaking, but only moral possibilities and predispositions. The moral life must commence with a resolving, a committing one's self. * * * Fortunate circumstances may do much in giving us good habits; good ancestry, a pure and loving home, may make good thoughts, good feelings, natural to us; these are all a help, they predispose to real morality, but they do not make it. Morality is my affair, your affair—each one's singly and solitarily—for it is my choice, your choice, which no one else under heaven can make for us. The same influences, the same gracious advantages, may lead to it or not lead to it; and what are sometimes thought to be the things that make our character for us may instead be our condemnation, if we do not turn them to account. Nothing can take the place of this energizing of our own personality. It is not merely that we must will in order to become moral, but morality is just willing. To choose, to prefer, to resolve, to strive—to do all this habitually, to thus turn to account every good thought and every good emotion—this is the substance and the core of the moral life. So

deeply do I feel this to be true, that I would say that an hour of conflict, of wrestling with a vicious appetite or passion, may be worth more than years of happiness when this comes from no effort or desert of your own."

Pp. 61–64. If, as said in these pages in the text, the past inevitably resolves into instances of solitary grandeur,—great figures, mighty persons, towering alone afar off, like mountain peaks from a plain, it is to be added that this tendency, which always exists and is effective in this present time, is especially active in primitive ages. And this for three reasons in chief: 1. The progress of mankind in arts, letters, laws, peace, all that we mean by civilization, is simply a steady rise of the many against, and over the supremacy of, the few. It is the increase of equality and the distribution of power, replacing extreme inequalities (high rank and deep abasement facing each other) and the concentration of power. Growth of civilization is synonymous, or at least coterminous and contemporaneous, with the rise and eminence of the people compared to the strong man. Hence the strong man, the powerful, the great, the glorious, eminent and mighty enough even now, was elevated and conspicuous still more in the ancient past, and hence even more assuredly than now and at a less distance in time, seemed to stand alone in the retrospect, all that was around him being melted into thin unimpressive figures.

2. This progress of civilization, namely, the general elevation, the rise of the many against the few, takes effect to produce a greater number of specially powerful and expressive men, because of the spread of knowledge, opportunity, peace. Hence in the past it was only the very mightiest that rose at all, and these shine the more alone at a distance, because not only they are few but, by the necessity of the conditions, the most mighty natures, very rare and very great.

3. Also, after every great epoch and glorious teacher or ruler, it is to be observed that there is a decline of inspiration for a time. A mighty era is followed by a common level, as plains stretch between mountain ranges. This always is so. A great epoch towers; then comes a level of rest and uncreative spirit in which the people expend themselves only in adoring the

towering age before them. And from this common level or depression or rest, the mighty epoch and the persons of it seem to tower still more by comparison. Hence not only they *are* great but by inevitable contrast they borrow greatness also.

P. 85. If the whole past with all its great prophets, its divine glories and its illustration of indwelling law, should be blotted out in an instant from the memories of men, humanity would at once begin to acquire it again, and by and by, as need were, would extract from itself as good Bibles as any ever found. All the modes of force which live and work with men would conspire to bring forth Religion and Morality, which would become deeper and purer by every gain of experience.

"The Good, the Beautiful, the True," as eternally realized in Being and evermore waiting to be realized in ourselves,—these are the bases of religion on the one hand and of morality on the other. They approach by their fervor, when both are noble and profound, by the emotion, the self-forgetfulness, the strength of conviction, the humility, the confidence, the meditative joy, which both share alike, which form the noblest attitude that can be called *faith*. Whether "the Good, the Beautiful and the True" be worshiped in Being, which is Religion, or loved as ideals to be attained, which is Morality, they are of the same divinity, and move the spirit to rapture,—a rapture embracing the intellectual ecstasy of the perception of them in the laws of all modes of force and all forms of existence. It is a great idea that lifts the soul up to where a great feeling is possible. A principle, abstracted from all applications, may be the object of the purest enthusiasm, because of the beauty, fitness, harmony and infinite in-weaving of its relations. "More than once," says Guizot, "for the glory of humanity, man, by the force of his intelligence and scientific meditations, has reached to beliefs, to which there has been wanting none of the characteristics of faith,—neither fulness nor certainty of conviction, nor the forgetfulness of personality, nor expansiveness and practical power, nor the pure and profound enjoyments of contemplation. Who would refuse to recognize in the belief of the most illustrious Stoics in the sovereignty of moral good,—in

Cleanthes, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius,—a true faith? And was not the religious faith of the principal Reformers or Reformed, of the sixteenth century, Zwingle, Melancthon, Duplessis Mornay, the fruit of study and science, as well as the philosophical doctrines of Descartes and Liebnitz? And lately, under the idea that falsehood is the source of all the vices of man, and that at no price, in no moment, and for no cause, can it be necessary to swerve from the truth, did not Kant arrive, by a long series of meditations, to a conviction perfectly analogous to faith? The analogy was such, that the day when his certainty of the principle became complete and definite constituted an epoch in his memory and life, as others call to mind the event or the emotion which has changed the condition of the soul; so that, dating from that day, according to his own testimony, he lived constantly in the presence and under the empire of this idea."

Religion is "*that which binds us back*," says a noble definition. When the Morality which points forward to the end of man, and the Religion which binds him back to the living Source of his life, exist pure and beautiful together, then the two poles of the Universe,—Being and the End of Being, the Holy Father and the Ethical Child, verge to a contact which completes the circle of life and joy, and flashes light over all the web of experience.

P. 92. When the Christians had visions and dreamed of the saints returning in their earthly forms to rescue or instruct, Athanasius said to them,—"These visions and shades of the saints, which appear in the temples and at the tombs, are not he souls of the saints themselves, but the good angels appearing in their shapes." A little further than Athanasius let us go. The souls of good persons here are heavenly with divine incarnations and shed around them the veritable atmosphere of God.

P. 117. When it is asked what Religion has to say about appalling things, pestilences, floods, earthquakes, that divine hand-maid of humanity can stand forth and speak faithfully on a high place; yet it is but a little time since with such a question she was whipped into a corner. For when the misery is all

gathered, then if religion have naught to do with it but to load it on Providence, to cry, bemoan and pray, averring that it is a bare, inscrutable will to which we must bow, this seems but a slinking away or a falling down affrighted; which is to be pardoned only on plea of ignorance.

It is many years now since religion has been saying aloud that the Father of heaven and earth brought happiness so speedily on the earth that yet there were dangers to fend off and struggles needful to maintain the joy. But if the earth had waited for a man to acknowledge the glorious stars till the crust had grown too thick and the center too cold ever to be tossed or shaken, what myriads of years would have passed, nay, now still would be passing, without the ecstasy of a heart being born here.

Meantime, mind and the earth have grown together, and with the tumults of nature mind learns to cope, when religion has grown great and strong. Wherefore now it is noticeable that these plagues, floods and quakings call not out processions, priests with masses, incense and prayers, as before; but that many pulpits have learned much better than to preach a desperate submission, and that scientific observers have hastened to the shaking, or flooded, or plague-ridden region to learn the causes, the laws, the warnings, which shall give us control of these things, as the true child of God was meant to have.

Meanwhile, if we know not yet why they are, still we are busy in them with a right piety; and religion, being healthfully engaged, is strong to take the fact as it is. Hence, neither is it luck to be cursed, nor a willful infliction to be bowed to, but a part of a holy order to be learned. And though there may be things to fear, and frightful sensations sweep over us when the earth rocks, yet what we have *not* to fear is Almightiness heaving the earth simply because it will, which is the only horrible terror. "Of all fears," says Plutarch, "none so daze and confuse as that of superstition. He fears not the sea that never goes to sea, nor the battle that follows not the camp, nor robbers that stirs not abroad, nor malicious informers that is a poor man, nor emulation that leads a private life, nor earthquakes that dwell in Gaul, nor thunderbolts that dwell in Ethopia; but he that dreads divine powers, dreads everything,

the sea, the air, the sky, the dark, and light, and sound, and silence, and a dream."

Pp. 126–129. Thoughts of Immortal Life.

I. LIFE—FORCE.

Once I went out in a wild bluster of spring winds. The sense of exhilaration was glorious. I exulted in "the uproar of their joy." A great sense of life arose when I saw the mighty trees rocking and tossing their branches against the hurrying clouds. The noise of the wind in the trees, like the roar of waves on a shore, spoke of a boundless power reveling in the mighty music. Yet not all that prodigious motion was equal in might to the stir of sap in the millions of cells that filled the spring weather with divine life, and covered the earth with green foliage. Nay, all the mechanics of the wind's frolic were only as a baby's hand for weakness compared to the molecular forces which shape a crystal. In the silent masonry which lays the courses of a gem, is the same fact of life that is in the roaring blast and in the waves that toss their white manes into the wind, and chase each other over the ocean-plain like a herd of wild horses. Life runs by our side in all things visible, audible, or perceivable by any sense, and resides in us, and is love, joy, will, intelligence and thought.

This being the prevalence of life, everything is an incident of life, a fact of life, a vital act. And death is such an incident of life, a part and act thereof! It comes stealing on the thought in its true semblance when the reason is most full of life. When we live most deeply and nobly, we see all things in their true relations, and behold death also as it is, an act in life, a motion, a succession from one sense to another, or to many senses, like the opening and closing of an eyelid, or like the physical changes and the skin-glow of exercise.

This fact concerning death, that it is a mere act of life, and, indeed, no more a mystery than all living acts, is indicated by many things. Indeed, the paths to the thought of the immortal life are past numbering, 'tis impossible to count the intimations. I speak not of arguments, because one argues

not what stands before the eye, or smites the ear, or fills the soul with acknowledged ecstasy. But the intimations that fall on us by the way, the rain of thoughts of life and of immortal being shed on us out of the mystery that enfolds us, can not be computed for the multitude of the drops thereof. And no day goes by without such showers, whereby the soul is softened and fertilized like to the earth in those favored climates where, in the season of the rain, every day receives some rain, and the soil is covered with large delicious fruits and with wonderful flowers, and with insects that drink the nectar. 'Tis needful only that we should live well enough, nobly enough, and life forthwith reports itself to us as kind to kind, and kindred to kindred, on every side.

II. DEFINITION BY THE HIGHEST FORM.

If life be called a property of protoplasm, on the contrary possibly protoplasm is a property of life. It is the question whether we may sink all life in its lowest manifestation, in that phenomenon which involves the least of it, saying thereupon: "Here is the cause of life; here it comes into being; this is all it is; it is a property of this drop of jelly;" or whether we shall raise that lowest manifestation according to the indication of the highest, and whether we must not interpret from the whole and perfect structure. The habit of tracing the evolution of the higher from the lower form has led to the beginning at this end also for the definition of all products, by which the highest and most complex are sunk in the lowest and most simple forms possessing any important trait in common with the superior organism. But this is a vicious process, which not only adds nothing to our knowledge of the whole meaning and complete relation of a high and noble form of life, but tends to treat its most distinctive and glorious capacities as its accidentals, and to view what it shares with the most inferior type of its order as all that is essential to it. But it must be insisted that, however the forms of life have developed from lower forms by slow degrees and through enormous lengths of time, when we wish to define the noble results of the process or to express in some fit way (as nearly adequate as may be) the glory and significance of the whole, we must count the powers comprising the full capacity of

the most splendid forms. We must not view the highest as being only variations of the lowest, their significance being in the "inferior limit," but we must treat the lowest as being prophetic of the highest, the meaning of the inferior being disclosed only in the most sublime forms appearing in the series. In fact, the order of time and of production is of one sort; but the order of thought is of another, and even the direct reverse. In time and production, nature has slowly toiled along from feeble and simple forms to the marvelous complexity and strength of the human form and brain. But in thought this existed first, was all the time in nature as the ideal or aim, was involved in the very structure of the manifold mechanism, and could never have appeared at any point if it had not existed forever in the Mysterious Source from which all the struggle of life proceeds, to which religion "binds us back."

Here, then, stands the transcendent fact of life, itself the issue of all the million years of the earth's gestation, and rising into forms so glorious that any one of the prodigious number of them would justify all the forerunning ages of labor. As the lowest forms are resolved into the significance of the highest, so the stupendous fact of life embraces all the signs and facts which led up to it. In it all the earth is sunk. It traverses the whole area of experience, from the irritability which contracts the jelly of a medusa to the fibers which bear the load of love or thought in a human brain. But it is the thought and love which define life, nor the irritability of the jelly-fish, or the circulation in the protoplasm of a plant.

III. IMMORTALITY AND CHARACTER.

The majesty of life, the display of power, the grandeur, the sublime and inspiring sights,—these are in mountains, in great rivers, in oceans, in gigantic trees and primeval forests, in Niagara, in the Amazon, in the Alps; but, greatest and most sublime of all, in the human will and the prodigious self-assertion of mind. It is this on which I wish to lay emphasis, as relating us to the vital currents that course around the earth, as plunging us in life till the waves roll above our heads. The sense of power and will in a great character, probably in all characters at great moments, is so grand, and its appearance a

sight so majestic that it is a look direct into life,—into the depth of personality, as immeasurable in what it may enjoy, and in the opportunity before it as in the innumerable æons which have brought it to the knowledge of itself. When we see such a character, or when we put it on for a little space, or fill ourselves with it, we are like Michael Angelo who "said that when he read the Iliad he looked at himself to see if he were not twenty feet in height;" we discover immortality; we are in presence of something superior to the mutations of any other thing; "personal continuance" appears inevitable, and death sweeps by like a bubble on nature's tide, bursting into the sky. This was the thought concealed in the rough reply of Frederick the Great "to a member of the academy who wanted to read him a long argument for the immortality of the soul: 'How so? You want to be immortal. But what have you done to deserve it?'" To deserve immortality is to lay hold of that which is essentially immortal; then, speedily the immortality thereof is mingled with our consciousness. "Did you never feel," says Higginson, "when fully resolved and concentrated on something, —did you never feel for the time being such a consciousness of an individual force that it seemed as if you must survive beyond this earthly existence; and that you were fitted and furnished for something more than three score years and ten? It does not seem to me that a vast amount of strength is required to create this impression. Joseph Glanvil, the old mystic, said: 'Who knoweth mystery of the will, and its vigor? Man yieldeth not to the angels nor to death utterly, save through the weakness of his feeble will!' . . . I say, with reverence, that God has put into some men's souls a sense of personal individuality so strong that they have no intention of dying. There is no argument that convinces us like the contemplation of a nature so strong. That Luther's or Theodore Parker's personal existence should have ceased! It is an absurdity!"

Pp. 172–173. In "A Study of Lessing," a French author, E. Fontanés, says: "He who seeks has already found. If he were a stranger to the truth, if it existed not within him, under the indefinite form of need, of desire, could he seek it? Is the brute a seeker of truth? He who seeks has caught al-

ready a glimpse of the truth, and he rouses from his inaction because he loves it, and aspires to win it and embrace it with indissoluble clasp. So felt Pascal, exclaiming with penetrating accent like Christ's, 'Be comforted: you could not seek me if you had not found me.'"

In the book of Genesis it is written: "God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But then went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground." The poet-author of the book of Job says, "It is the divine spirit in man, even the inspiration of the Almighty, that giveth him understanding." How these two texts may go together or how be woven will appear plain very soon by reason of a pretty allegorical image or interpretation which St. Augustine drew from this passage of Genesis, that old poem of creation. The ancient bard who sang the six days of creation and the rest upon the seventh day, may have been thinking of the dew when describing how the earth was watered. Evidently he felt he must provide some way of giving drink to the thirsty vegetables for his song clothed the earth with them before any rain had fallen. So he drew the poetic picture of a mist exhaled by the earth itself and then settling down and moistening the ground. There is a philosophical exactness in the words of our translation, and so, I find, there is also in the original. It is moisture that rises from the *earth*, that is, from the whole globe, the *orbis terrarum*, this being the first meaning of the Hebrew as it is of the English *earth*, from the deep interior,—it is, I say, the moisture from these deep resources which rises and waters the face of the *ground*, that is, the surface, the soil which the husbandman turns up, a few inches deep, with his tools, this being the first meaning of the Hebrew original as it is of the English *ground*. As if to make this still plainer, the poet writes "the *face* of the ground." The thought suggested is that, while the earth seems to water itself and therefore it would appear as if nothing were gained, it is the deep places and the whole substance which send up the refreshment to bathe the surface. Possibly it was with this thought in mind that Augustine drew from the text the

figurative meaning which I have mentioned. At any rate, the Saint's interpretation agrees well with the idea that it is out of the deeps that the surface of life is refreshed. Augustine's explanation occurs in a work in which he is defending the book of Genesis against the objections of certain heretics. This he does as to the literal meaning of the story of creation. But also he states that there is beside a spiritual meaning hidden in the form of an allegory. In virtue of this spiritual meaning, Augustine taught that when it is related that there was a time when no rain fell upon the earth, but that a mist rising from the deep earth watered the face of the ground, "this means that prophets and apostles were once unnecessary, for every man bore the spring of revelation in his own breast." Here it is that we come upon the doctrine of the writer of Job, "It is the divine spirit in man, even the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth him understanding." For if there were no need of apostles and prophets because every one has the spring of revelation in his own breast, then revelation is like the moisture that watered the face of the ground. It must come up from the invisible deeps, from the spirit of man not as cut off from the divine life and living by itself, but as joined with the Infinite Spirit and inspired with understanding by the perfect and almighty life in whom man lives and moves and has being.

One thing seems very clear: that if revelation be not by nature in us, it cannot be in any manner. If revelation sprang not from a deep well within, unfathomable, according to Augustine's interpretation of the ancient legend, then surely, there could be no revelation for us at all. Nothing can be put upon us from without; it must rise within us from the Source of being. No law can come *to* us with authority, unless it be already enacted *in* us. It seems very plain that if the divine things, the thoughts, the fears, the hopes, the adoration, the prayers, the mysteries, said to be revealed and inscribed here or there, at this time or that, came not up from within, from the deeps where all the manifold is lost in the One, then we could not so much as catch a glimmer from the language of the revelation; it would speak in a tongue and with words to us unknown and lifeless.

P. 208. Reading in Wordsworth one morning,—for I like to begin the day with a poet, and keep one by me, lying long on my desk for that purpose,—I came on these passages in the fifth book of "The Excursion":—

> "The untutored bird may found and so construct,
> And with such soft materials line her nest.
> Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,
> That the thorns wound her not: they only guard.'
>
> "I knew a Scottish peasant who possessed
> A few small crofts of stone-encumbered ground;
> Masses of every shape and size, that lay
> Scattered about under the moldering walls
> Of a rough precipice; and some, apart,
> In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,
> As if the moon had showered them down in spite;
> But he repined not. Though the plow was scarred
> By these obstructions, 'Round the shady stones
> A fertilizing moisture,' said the swain,
> Gathers and is preserved; and feeding dews
> And damps, through all the droughty summer day,
> From out their substance issuing, maintain
> Herbage that never fails. No grass springs up
> So green, so fresh, so plentiful as mine.'"

These pictures of the bird defended by the thorns that might seem to threaten her gentle breast, and the rocks gathering and shading moisture, and dews oozing from them in dry times, arrested me. I fell to thinking how true it is that there is no evil but drags some good after it. I have read that many an Eastern farmer, by vigorous cultivation, deep plowing, and much working of the ground, has got therefrom as good returns as some Western farmers who trust more to the fertility of their unbroken soil, and water it the less with their sweat. Perhaps the gain in manly vigor and effective habits may be a good thing furnished by the evils of stony and bleak soils. It seems, I said to myself, that evils never are set going in freedom nor turned adrift unbound, to do as they list, but always tethered in some way to a weight of good which they must drag after them.

Thereupon, I began to think whether this fact be enough probed and searched to find out its full meaning; for I could not think of any ill which had not a good closely bound to it. And if, indeed, there were no bad thing whatsoever but must perforce bring a good thing with it, so that no evil is free, but always chained, and like a vicious animal dragging a good freight, I thought this might teach us a great deal about the

nature of the Unseen and Eternal, on whose holiness and love depend our worship, our hope, and our joy.

Finding then that I could imagine no ill which did not help make some good, like a misshapen workman building a comely house, it came to me suddenly to ask whether, on the other hand, there were any good which did not bring with it some evil. And, in this, I was no more successful than before; for I could call to mind no pleasure without a pain and no excellence, of whatsoever kind, that had not some evils mingled with it or trooping after it. Here, then, must I stand, facing the fact that, although there be nothing altogether evil, as little, also, is there anything wholly good? For then, if the one fact be good for faith and hope, the other fact is bad for them; and religion will have a fall out of the sky, like a bird whose two wings should oppose instead of help each other. Thereupon, striving again to think of some good without detraction, something wholly excellent, I thought of this: that it is altogether a good that there should be no evil without a good; for surely there can be no mixture of ill in the bonds laid on ill to bring some good with it.

Here, then, there seemed to be a good which was unmixed and pure; and my soul was triumphant. But speedily came this question, Is not the fact, on the other hand, that every good brings an ill, a fact totally evil? But to this I answered, No; for the pain that comes with pleasure, or the ill of what kind soever that goes with a good, may be a discipline of mind to fit it to love and enjoy the good, and all other excellencies, the more: whereas the good that follows an evil has no drift to make the mind love the evil better, but contrariwise. Thus, it seemed there was to be seen an unmixed good, but no unmixed ill. Here, I rested, with my heart content.

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